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Coping with cannabis in a Caribbean country : from problem formulation to going public

Analyzes the dialectic between problem discovery and formulation, ethical considerations, and the public dissemination of research results. Author describes his personal experience of fieldwork, the moral-ethical dilemmas it involved, and the circulation of research findings on cannabis production and consumption in St. Vincent. He became frustrated that his academic publications were only accessible to a tiny portion of St. Vincent's population and therefore decided to publish about cannabis in the local media.

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COPING WITH CANNABIS IN A CARIBBEAN COUNTRY: FROM PROBLEM FORMULATION TO GOING PUBLIC

INTRODUCTION: STUDYING DRUGS CARIBBEAN STYLE

In his otherwise comprehensive and penetrating assessment of the Caribbean as an open frontier of anthropological inquiry, Michel-Rolph Trouillott (1992) omits two exemplars of the region's unboundedness: wage-labor migration and illegal drugs.¹ My concern here is with the latter, specifically marijuana, an illicit substance that has been present in the Antilles far longer than elsewhere in the hemisphere.² Though it was the subject of a comprehensive anthropological field study in Jamaica in the early 1970s that yielded two monographs (Rubin & Comitas 1975; Dreher 1982) and several articles,³ ganja, as *Cannabis sativa* is commonly known in the region, has received only brief and sporadic treatment in recent years (Hayes 1991; Rubenstein 1988, 1995). Since marijuana was not well established in places other than Jamaica and Trinidad before the early to mid-1970s, this means that knowledge about its differential regional introduction, acceptance, spread, production, exchange, and consumption are largely confined to newspaper reports and information from police interdiction and eradication efforts. Conversely, recent Caribbean drug studies by political scientists lack the fine-grained, humanistic, and grounded quality of ethnographic reportage and have been preoccupied with macro-level features of drug production and trafficking, drug related crime, local and regional organized drug control efforts (the so-called "war on drugs"), the laundering of drug money, arms smuggling, and the corruption of elected and other officials (Griffith 1993, 1997; Maingot 1993; Sanders 1993).

Moreover, this new research thrust has focused at least as much on cocaine as on marijuana even though the former is neither produced in the region nor as widely consumed there as the latter. Studies of the drug trade and allied issues also tend to uncritically assume that illicit mind-altering substances are unequivocally harmful,⁴ a supposition that cultural anthropologists customarily question on empirical and other grounds (Room 1984). Such studies also generally ignore or superficially dismiss the possibility that first, many if not most of the real or alleged problems associated with illicit drugs are rooted not in their intrinsic psycho-active properties but in the very fact that involvement with them has been criminalized and, second, the war on drugs has created far more moral, legal, social, political, and economic problems than it has solved.⁵

These newer studies, based as they are on the analysis of already published material (media stories, government reports, the first-hand accounts of anthropologists and other fieldworkers, etc.), are also immune to the methodological and allied problems inherent in first-hand ethnographic or comparable research. These problems are common to all anthropological and equivalent *in situ* studies of deviant or criminal behavior and include researcher stress, the conflict between the needs of science and the responsibilities of citizenship, possible complicity in illicit activity, the ethical and legal implications of surreptitious research, difficulties obtaining informed consent, the need to protect informants and data from official scrutiny, and the potential adverse effects of publication (Akeroyd 1984: 143-46). Only one of these issues was fleetingly discussed in a single short paragraph in the often cited Rubin and Comitas study (1975:x): as in the bulk of the larger anthropological literature devoted to illegal activity no attention was paid to the dialectic between these personal and ethical considerations and the problem of problem discovery and formulation, on the one hand, and the mode of circulation of research findings, on the other. How and why do researchers decide to study illegal substances when doing so may prove risky to both self and Other? How do they obtain (or bypass obtaining) permission to do so from their sponsors, hosts, and informants? How can the field study of such activities, most of which are both clandestine and dangerous to their participants, be reconciled with the professional obligation to publicly disseminate one's research findings?

The danger to self and Other associated with the ethnographic study of illegal or deviant behavior also means that research tends to take place in a single (though sometimes lengthy) period of fieldwork. Accordingly, continuous or repeat studies of prohibited activities have been as much eschewed in the Caribbean as they have elsewhere despite the fact that a

diachronic research strategy is best suited to their understanding. This is because such behaviors are habitually marked by much volatility and conflict, the features of which can be studied as they occur or shortly thereafter. Moreover, discovering the principles behind the flux and friction is best done employing a long-term research strategy (Foster 1978). So is an understanding of the dialectic between problem discovery and formulation, ethical considerations, and the public dissemination of research results.

My aim is to describe and analyze the long-term, reflexive interplay between problem formulation, the personal experience of fieldwork, moral-ethical dilemmas, and the circulation of research findings in my experience of learning and writing about ganja in a small, rural community in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (hereafter identified by its local acronym, SVG). Though I do not deny that the extant anthropological studies have enhanced our understanding of cannabis among its Caribbean producers, sellers, and consumers, they follow the "normal science" (Kuhn 1962) approach to methodology, description, and analysis. Scientism rules, the voice of the ethnographer is absent or muted (except as embedded "objective" prescriptive authority or in a short "Introduction" where field techniques are briefly enumerated), and the voices of users, growers, and pushers are taken at face value. Though these features are understandable in the context of 1970s method and theory, they now seem static, unidirectional, mechanistic, even unauthentic. In particular, there is hardly a domain of social behavior (save perhaps human sexuality) that is more subject to subjectivity, caprice, and reflexivity – to deception, fiction, exaggeration, myth making, stereotyping, unpredictability, and moralizing – than illegal substances.

My experience with cannabis in Leeward Village (a pseudonym) highlights just how subjective, reflexive, and problematic the field experience can be. To be sure, whether ethnographers acknowledge this or not in their writings, all fieldwork involving participant-observation has these qualities. What may be different (though not necessarily unique) about my research in SVG is the direct and public manner in which I reacted to the subjective, the reflexive, and the problematic in my study of ganja. In their influential *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, Marcus and Fischer (1986:138) argue that "The challenge of serious cultural criticism is to bring the insights gained on the periphery back to the center to raise havoc with our settled ways of thinking and conceptualization," thereby reminding us that cultural anthropology has always been an academic exchange mainly with and for the West about the Rest. My experience studying and writing about ganja in SVG suggests that the genuine

globalization of anthropology should also mean that insights from either domain should be employed to raise havoc in the periphery too when the settled ways of thinking and conceptualization there are as intolerant or uncritical as their counterparts at the center.

CANNABIS AND CLASS

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a small (388 km²; 110,000 people) nation-state located in the southeastern part of the Caribbean Sea.⁶ A former British sugar colony, the country is still economically dependent on the former motherland for the sale of all its bananas, the country's main (legal) cash crop and main (legal) export. Though it has experienced some superficial economic growth in recent years, SVG has long been one of the poorest countries with one of the highest un(der)employment rates in the region (Rubenstein 1987; Potter 1992:xxi-xxiii). Together with its rugged terrain, limited road network, vast expanse of unsupervised Crown lands, inadequately patrolled coastal waters, and proximity to marijuana-hungry neighbors like Barbados, St. Lucia, and Martinique this has helped make SVG the second highest marijuana producer in the entire Caribbean after Jamaica (*The News* 1992:1), a country where ganja has been produced and consumed for nearly 150 years (Rubin & Comitas 1975).

Though cannabis is now king of crops in SVG, it is a cultigen associated with the most ignoble of Vincentians: young, poor, rural, black men. It is this feature, along with the alleged dangers of smoking ganja, that account for much of the societal opposition to it. This is because despite a great deal of overall upward mobility over the past fifty years, much of it resulting from migration overseas for work or study, the Vincentian populace remains hierarchically stratified by race and color, income and property, occupation and education, prestige and respectability, and privilege and power (Fraser 1975; Rubenstein 1987). To be sure, SVG is now a sovereign state with a fully-enfranchised black electorate. Still, the many examples of black people rising from near the bottom to near the top of the class hierarchy have blurred rather than erased the main social and economic boundaries. Many features of the traditional racial hierarchy are still evident, and a disproportionate number of the largest businesses (such as supermarkets and the biggest department stores) are in the hands of whites, mulattoes, and foreigners. Most black Vincentians (three-quarters of the population according to preliminary reports from the 1990 census) are poor and most poor Vincentians (between two-thirds and three-quarters of the population) are black. The lowest-ranked and most destitute

poor black people are young rural males between their late teens and mid-thirties, a category that is habitually pejoratively labeled by all other status groups as rowdy, uncouth, blasphemous, lazy, thievish, ignorant, illiterate, violent, and unkempt. Sometimes feared because of their alleged predilection for lawless or anti-social behavior, often reviled for appearing to flout societal norms of respectability, it is these youths and young men who are the most conspicuous and unapologetic of marijuana growers, sellers, and smokers.

Cannabis sativa is a prohibited cultigen in SVG that carries severe juridical sanctions. Concomitantly, its production, sale, and consumption have been associated with much internecine conflict and praedial larceny, thousands of police raids and ganja seizures, and hundreds of imprisonments and/or costly fines. Between 20 to 25 percent of the prison population is incarcerated for "dangerous drug" offenses (St. Vincent and the Grenadines 1991, 1994), many involving tiny quantities of marijuana meant only for personal use.

INITIATION, 1969-72

Marijuana was the furthest thing from my mind when I went to SVG in 1969 to conduct field research on poverty and social networks for my doctoral dissertation (Rubenstein 1976). The plant is not indigenous to the country and only years later did I realize that I had inadvertently "studied" its early introduction into the country.

Nearly all my long-term research in SVG has taken place in Leeward Village, a rural community of 2,300 people on the western side of St. Vincent Island (see Rubenstein 1987). Soon after I moved into the community, I became acquainted with a loosely-knit friendship clique of about a dozen young men aged between sixteen and twenty. One day as we stood chatting under a shade tree, they asked me what I knew about marijuana. Though I had spent the previous year in a large student housing co-operative in Toronto where all sorts of drugs were easily obtained, I had no familiarity with marijuana. But I knew enough to draw a crude outline of its well-known leaf shape on the ground in front of us, casually remarking that because cannabis grows well in tropical countries, there might be some wild plants in the vicinity of the village. To my surprise, I later learnt that several clique members had spent much of the next day scouring the overgrown areas of the agricultural estate bordering the village in a failed attempt to locate some marijuana plants.

These youths were better educated and more worldly than most of their

village peers. They were also quite gregarious. Two of them had grown up in Kingstown, SVG's small capital of 16,000 people, and had many friends and acquaintances there. Most of the others either had jobs or were attending high school in the city. All of them also occasionally went there to *lime* (hang out) in order to escape the boredom of village life. If marijuana had had more than the most limited distribution at that time, I am sure that they would have known about it.

One of these same young men, Willie (a pseudonym), aged twenty-one, visited my home early one Friday night about eighteen months later. After some preliminary banter, he produced a brown paper bag from under his shirt. The bag held what seemed to be about two ounces of marijuana. According to Willie, the marijuana was part of a small stash that had been smuggled into the country by a friend of one of the Peace Corps volunteers who had been living and teaching in the village during most of my fieldwork there. Willie also confessed that though he and two of these volunteers had smoked together on several occasions, they had asked him not to tell me about their activities, fearing, I suppose, that I would either report them to the police or insist on sharing in their windfall. The bag of marijuana was left for Willie as a farewell gift.

Willie had been one of the heaviest drinkers in his liming group and the rum shop across from my rented house received a good portion of its revenue from his sometimes nightly drinking sessions with fellow limers and other villagers. But his introduction to marijuana resulted in a quick conversion for he nearly abandoned rum drinking for weed smoking. Many years later, when I began to systematically explore local ganja ethnohistory, I learned that Willie had smoked (and later peddled) domestic and imported marijuana non-stop until his migration to Trinidad in 1977.

A second community member began to smoke marijuana in the village a few months later. After returning from Britain with his new English wife, Joel obtained some marijuana via the woman's overseas contacts. Though they limited their smoking to the privacy of their rented apartment, their use of ganja must have attracted the attention of other villagers because they were soon arrested and convicted for possession of the substance. Again, only years later when I began to peruse back issues of *The Vincentian*, the country's oldest newspaper, for data on activities and opinions relating to marijuana did I find out that the couple were among the first island residents ever charged with ganja possession.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION, 1980

I considered these two experiences as social aberrations in village life because I did not even record them in the diary I sporadically kept during this first and longest (two and a half years) of my dozen field trips to SVG. They were not even part of my consciousness during my next visit to Leeward Village, a two-month sojourn in June 1980. The production and sale of marijuana was by now well established in the community, though I did not realize this until I started paying ethnographic attention to it several years later (Rubenstein 1988). I did interact with some people involved with ganja, including a twenty-five-year-old craftsman who was also a local grower and pusher. Still, I made no attempt to study the substance except by making some sketchy entries in my field diary:

Thursday, July 31, 1980: He [Ishmael] has lots of produce planted in the backyard – tomatoes, cucumbers, bananas, etc. – which he sells at his shop. Also has marijuana plants growing in *the Mountain* [the entire area of hilly agricultural valley land that stretches nearly three miles behind Leeward Village].

Sunday, August 3, 1980: Ishmael keeps a large number of joints [actually *spliffs* or marijuana cigarillos] in an old cookie tin.

Tuesday, August 5, 1980: Ishmael had just returned from the Mountain where he had gone to inspect his marijuana plants to assess the extent of damage [from Hurricane Allen which had devastated the island the day before]. About one dozen plants damaged. He picked many [plants] and will dry them and try to sell them to a dealer in Kingstown. Has been growing marijuana for a couple of years. Apparently several farmers are growing it on a commercial or semi-commercial basis. Ishmael used to consign joints to several young men on a 50-50 basis. But it didn't work out since the boys claimed that they had to dispose of their produce because of the police. Ishmael smokes a great deal of *grass* – several joints [spliffs] within a 2-3 hour period – as do many other young men in the village. His wife also smokes but not too heavily.

FIRST RESEARCH, 1986

The project that brought me back to the community for another two-month field trip at the end of June 1986, a study of marital union formation, could hardly have been further removed from the study of marijuana.⁷ But even as my luggage was being inspected at SVG's tiny airport, the thought of ganja fleetingly crossed my mind when a customs officer asked me whether I was coming from Jamaica, the Caribbean's premier ganja

producer. A negative reply brought an abrupt end to his search of my belongings. As I reached my destination in a part of Leeward Village that I later discovered housed the greatest concentration of the community's marijuana smokers and growers, I again was reminded of ganja from the distinctive odor of its smoke coming from a knot of young men lounging along the roadside about twenty yards away.

Given its illegal status and a lack of permission to study it from the relevant parties (the government, my university, and the granting agency), I only slowly – and hesitantly – turned my attention to marijuana as I began to discover how important it had become in village social and economic life. Part of my first diary entry on ganja reads:

Monday, July 14, 1986: Kenny, a rastaman⁸ who grows the weed, came over with a spliff ... and stayed for about 1.5 hrs. I asked him about the marijuana trade and growing techniques and he said that *sens* [sinsemilla, the potent virgin female variety of the plant] is mainly grown ... A pound of marijuana is valued at 300-400 [Eastern Caribbean] dollars⁹ ... Marijuana is grown on Crown Lands in large clusters of plants ... Police raids occur only when there are fights among growers. One such fight occurred between Ishmael and another man in which ... Ishmael ambushed the other man with a group of friends after threatening to kill him following a fist fight over the theft of marijuana crops. The man was beaten in the Mountain where he slept while overseeing his growing produce ... Left for dead, he crawled down to the road and managed to call for help. The case is still pending.

A tragic early morning event nine days later further piqued my interest in ganja.

Wednesday, July 23, 1986: A young man named Woods ... was killed this morning in a motorcycle collision with another cycle [owned by his ganja-planting companion] as he was coming back from *changing* [re-pasturing] his animals ... He was a Rasta and had bought the cycle and built a house occupied by himself and his common-law wife and three children with earnings from growing marijuana.

Woods's colleague was questioned by the police and is alleged to have revealed the locale where he and others were growing marijuana. The Special Services Unit (SSU), the police squad responsible for illegal substance interdiction, was quickly alerted by the village police resulting in an immediate raid of the areas that had been identified. Other ganja growers were rounded up for questioning over the next few days and two additional SSU Mountain operations took place over the next few weeks. Thousands of plants representing hundreds of hours of work were soon destroyed. Two young men apprehended on one of these raids pleaded

guilty to growing marijuana and each received a nine-month prison sentence.¹⁰

A week later,

Wednesday, July 30, 1986: I ... broached the possibility with Ishmael of doing a study of marijuana cultivation [with his help as a research assistant]. He picked up on it but seemed more concerned with finding a commercial outlet [with my assistance]. He talked about large plantings in the hills, the absence of negative effects of smoking, arguing that this view [i.e. that it was harmful to smoke marijuana] was being expressed by those who do not smoke.

I can mark my formal, though unsanctioned, study of marijuana the next afternoon when I employed Ishmael as a principal informant and go-between. Such formalization resulted in an intensification of my observations of and participation in his marijuana activities:

Saturday, August 2, 1986: He [Ishmael] had gone to *Zion* [the name he had given to remote inland Crown land area where he and others had been growing marijuana for several years] the day before around noon and seems to have reaped about 1 lb. He sent 8 oz. to town with Walter, a teenager who is working for him ... He wanted \$EC250.00 for the 8 oz. but said he would take \$EC200.00 minimum ... The boy returned in about two hours with \$EC225.00. The amount paid depends on color, texture, freshness, smell, and potency.

Monday, August 4, 1986: We went up to the house and packed some supplies and water and set off about 8:30 a.m. for *Zion*. The climb through Old Bush [the furthest region of agricultural lands in the valley] was long and hard. It took us 2.5 hours to reach the summit along a slippery, narrow, and very steep trail. Large fallen trees, low hanging ferns and vines had to be maneuvered over or under. I fell a couple of times and got my arms very scrapped up ... We had to climb up and over a couple of trees ... We rested once we got to the top. Ishmael has 3 gardens, which he calls no. 1, no. 2, and no. 3, in various stages of cultivation ...

Ishmael has a hut there which he built for storage and sleeping. The roof of the enclosure is made out of old plastic sheets for protection from the rain and to catch water in. He lost two crops in a row a couple of years ago and had a team of several boys sleeping over for weeks on end when he was involved in larger-scale growing. Many of the boys he has brought up there to work felt it was too far and hard to get to and didn't come back again.

The areas of cultivation are very steep and small banks [tiny terraces] are dug prior to cultivation. In order to guard against rats eating the seeds, Ishmael planted some of the *herb* [ganja] in raised beds. Built on a wooden frame, the seeds are sown in small plastic envelopes and later transplanted. The only variety planted is sinsemilla. Male plants are

deliberately exorcized as soon as they are recognized ...

We began our descent about 4:00 p.m. and got down to the junction about 5:30. Going down was harder than going up and I slipped and fell several times. I had to slide down on my backside or crawl sideways several times. I was quite muddled by the time I got back to the house. My arms were covered with dozens of small scrapes and scratches and everyone laughed at my condition. [But] I felt quite proud about having made the trek, a trip that many villagers would not make. It brought home how difficult marijuana cultivation really is.

The next day Ishmael and I met to have lunch in Kingstown:

Tuesday, August 5, 1986: We ate in a little open air snackette in Paul's Lot [a part of the capital well known for drug sales and other illegal activity]. Rasta food – no meat or salt ... We then went to an *herb gate* [a place where marijuana is sold and/or smoked] – a house on Paul's Avenue colorfully painted [in Rastafarian hues] with a bar at one end and a hall for smoking marijuana at the other. There were 15 adolescents and young adults, most [judging from their dress and demeanor] from the countryside, according to Ishmael, who had come there to buy marijuana and have a smoke during their lunch hour from working in Kingstown. The premises are owned by a large dealer and there was a fairly new and expensive Toyota Corolla parked in the driveway. Only a few of the men were obviously Rasta in hair style and dress. There were only men present although some girls are supposed to be there at night. We stayed about 15 minutes until the rain let up. No one paid any real attention to me and apparently there is no trouble from the police. There are [according to Ishmael] about 6-8 such *herb gates* in Kingstown.

Until my departure three weeks later, I continued my investigation of marijuana. I made many observations of public and private ganja consumption and I conducted interviews (most of them tape recorded) with twelve other smokers, growers, and pushers, including two whose marijuana gardens I also visited:

Friday, August 15, 1986: Elton passed by just before 8:00 a.m. and we walked along the path to his land ... He asked me why I wanted to go up to the land telling me that his girlfriend [common-law wife] was suspicious of my motives. I explained again my interest in coming right on the spot to talk about his cultivation. I [again] assured him of confidentiality; I also said that his girlfriend was quite right in trying to protect his interests. It was a pleasant walk to Elton's father's land ... It is about 1/2 mile from the main road and much of it is along the steep slopes up the head of the valley. The land reaches right to the crown and the cultivated areas are mainly along the hillsides. Three brothers work the land separately and his father has not been to the lands for several years. Kenny is located in the flat towards the bottom of the holding. Elton's other brother, who lives at home with his father, has his *itals* [vegetables] up the hill and his herb further to the north around the side

of the same hill. Elton has his provisions [vegetables] about 30 yards away and his *herb* in two plots, one separated by a narrow strip from his itals and the other about 50 yards away on the other side of the hill. We visited each of the [ganja] plots in turn and I interviewed him [by tape recorder] after we got back. He was quite forthright and open about his own activities and the manner in which he had been ripped off over the years. He has a small hut with two bunks and since his plants are beginning to bud says he will start sleeping in the garden to protect the ganja from theft sometime in the next few weeks. He will only come to the village at midnight and leave at midnight and his girlfriend will tell people that he has gone to the Grenadines to work (as she did last year). He says that he has made up his mind to go to prison if he is caught.

SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH, 1987-88

Once again I returned to Leeward Village in July 1987 for an eleven-month field study of Vincentian land use patterns funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRCC). My grant application had proposed a comparison of agrarian practice in Leeward Valley and the Marriacqua Valley, a region on the southeast coast of the island. Though I planned to pursue my growing interest in ganja by studying its place in the larger farming complex, I mentioned this only obliquely in the research application:

Leeward Valley contains some 600 hectares of privately owned land divided into nearly 300 separate plots. Although peasant and small-scale commercial farming was the major valley occupation during the late 1960s and early 1970s, less than 20 percent of valley acreage was cultivated. This situation has changed during the past few years. My own observations in 1980 and 1986 and discussions with villagers indicate a significant increase in valley cultivation. The causes and extent of this transformation need to be studied in detail although decreased migration opportunities and the introduction of a new cash crop – marijuana – seem to be important surface manifestations of more fundamental causes lying outside of the island itself (Rubenstein 1986).

Since I was still reluctant to fully embrace the study of marijuana because of the personal and other dangers this might involve, I feared that too much attention to the substance in the application might open up an ethical and political can of worms: SSHRCC might expect written permission from the Vincentian government to study the crop, something I assumed (partly based on my conversations with an overseas consultant and the head of a local NGO the year before) would be difficult if not impossible to obtain.

It was not until February 1988, after I had been in the field for over

seven months, that I finally consulted the Attorney General and the Minister of Education about my marijuana research. To my surprise and delight, rather than discouraging my efforts to study cannabis, both men readily agreed to support my inquiries. The Attorney General instructed the Commissioner of Police to assist me in obtaining whatever data I needed. Among other things, this gave me access to restricted police drug interdiction material. The Minister of Education permitted me to conduct an island-wide survey of drug use among secondary school students. This provided me with a wealth of attitudinal and other data. Little did I know at the time that the promise that I was given by the Attorney General and others that I would not be harassed in my marijuana research would not be fulfilled.

DAINGEROUS DRUGS ARE DAINGEROUS TO STUDY, 1989

As in nearly all other countries, marijuana is legally defined as a "dangerous drug" in SVG. If my reading of the scientific literature told me that the myriad of dangers attributed to it by the Vincentian general public and medical community were either grossly exaggerated, had been proven groundless years before, or still remained conjectural, there was incontrovertible evidence of the dangers associated with the fact that marijuana is an illegal substance: the country's dungeon-like prison held hundreds of inmates who had been convicted of various marijuana-related crimes. But I was ill prepared for the police operation against me when I returned to SVG in 1989 for two months of follow-up research.

My first difficulty with the police had actually occurred the year before when the film in my camera was seized after I was spotted photographing a SSU ganja raid in the village. The film was returned to me several days later after I had been given the following counsel by the head of the west coast police division: "We wish you wouldn't take photos. It creates anxiety."¹¹

My own anxiety was raised to a record level in July 1989 when I was roused from a sound sleep by a loud knocking at the door of my rented apartment. The dreaded "Mongoose Gang," as the SSU is called by ganja devotees, armed with handguns and M-16 assault rifles (provided by the United States Drug Enforcement Agency) had come to subject me to one of their frightening pre-dawn raids. A warrant signed by the Commissioner of Police was flashed in front of my face. This was followed by a systematic thirty to forty minute exploration of the apartment and its contents.

Studying illegal or deviant behavior is always a potentially dangerous activity – for both self and Other. The first priority has to be to one's informants, protecting them from harassment or worse. This was partly why I had sought permission from the Attorney General, Commissioner of Police, and other authorities to conduct my marijuana research asking only that my interest in it exempt my ganja informants and me from deliberate police surveillance or persecution. This assurance was given to me by all parties.

It was on the basis of this promise that I customarily allowed marijuana informants to smoke in my rented quarters. Not only did this serve to reinforce my credibility with the *ganja man*, as anyone devoted to smoking, growing, or pushing marijuana is called, it also placed informants in a congenial frame of mind for discussing their experiences with the substance. As he lit up a spliff while I was setting up my equipment for a tape recorded interview, one young man stated, "I had to "burn" [smoke] something before I could talk about *that*."

The search left me stunned and confused. I felt fear, rage, helplessness, even victimization and marginalization (see Pelto & Pelto 1978:185-89), emotions that repeatedly had been expressed to me by my informants when they talked about marijuana *tribulation* (the conflicts that involvement with it causes) (cf. Bourgois 1995). An overnight guest was subjected to a humiliating internal examination by the lone female officer who is always charged with this duty. Shock quickly turned to anger. I knew that the commanding NCO was familiar with my research because of my many visits to the Criminal Investigation Division, SSU's parent body, where his unit was headquartered. When he kept responding to my indignation about the raid with the reply that his job was not confined to searching for drugs, it finally occurred to me to examine the search warrant only to find that my name had been badly misspelled and that it referred to "the illegal possession of a firearm," an accusation that seemed to bear little relation to the exploration of my guest's vagina.

I complained about the raid, which I considered both an unacceptable invasion of my privacy and a breach of the understanding that had been reached with the police, to the Attorney General. The latter seemed genuinely angered, claiming that he had repeatedly chided the police for conducting frivolous raids, and immediately called the Commissioner of Police to launch an inquiry. A chance meeting with the Commissioner the next week allowed me to protest to him in person. He said that he regretted the embarrassment it had caused me, that he had had no prior knowledge of the raid because it was impossible for him to peruse the many warrants he had to sign every day, and that "national security"

required that the police act on all reports that are made to them about illegal activity.¹²

FROM SPY TO SPOKESMAN, 1991-92

Since 1969 there have been vague rumors circulating mainly among some of the youth of the community that I am a CIA agent (despite my Canadian birth, citizenship, and life-long residence) sent by Uncle Sam to spy on the people of Leeward Village. Of course, ethnographers are often accused of snooping for their actual or alleged sponsors (Brettell 1993; Bourgois 1995) and most villagers did not seem to either believe or be affected by such rumors. Some people have simply retorted "Spy on *what?*" when we occasionally discussed this allegation, expressing their incredulity that there might be anything going on in the community that could remotely interest the U.S. government.

In 1991 the old allegations of spying took a particularly nasty twist when the following faxed information from a member of the advance organizing team in SVG was passed on to me regarding an upcoming international conference on Vincentian environmental institutions that I had been invited to address:

[D]oes Hymie Rubenstein realize that there are some vicious rumours going around about him and his research that he did on ganja production and distribution in Leeward Village? You know what it is like here – virtually impossible to substantiate any rumour – but I have been told that there are some people who believe that he released names or specifics in his study, and as a result some people in that area of St. Vincent were arrested. I have been told that there were death threats from people in the village made against him. It is hard to say how serious such threats are or even if they were ever made, if all this has blown over (either the perception or the reality). I have no idea what the truth of the matter is. I can not get a copy of the study here, and can not say how many people hold this perception of his research. It seems as though only a very small group of people in Kingstown know anything about it. But I think that he should be told – be made aware that there is this perception floating around – particularly because ganja production is going to be one of the topics he discusses in his presentation on land use.

The study referred to was a brief, preliminary description of what I had learned about marijuana in Leeward Village on my 1986 field trip (Rubenstein 1988). On my initiative, its publication had been reported as a government news release by the Vincentian press. Copies of the publication, which were available in the Kingstown Public Library and elsewhere,

carefully obscured the identity of individuals and employed the "Leeward Village" pseudonym. But my heart still sank when I received this information. Though providing information to the police about illegal substances is a routine activity in SVG, it would be unconscionable for an anthropologist to do so.

When I arrived in Leeward Village in April 1991 for a few days visit before attending the conference in Kingstown, I carefully inquired about the accusations in the fax. None of the several close marijuana informants I consulted had heard about them, though I did learn that one young Leeward Villager (who had assisted me with my ganja research in 1986 and 1987) had been arrested for possession of marijuana in 1990 in a random search of a passenger van outside the community.

Nearly all members of the tiny Vincentian social and intellectual elite were invited to attend the proceedings of the three-day conference.¹³ My participation consisted of describing the history of Vincentian exports crops from the country's first European settlement in 1719 to the present. Though less than one-third of my talk dealt with the latest of these cash crops, marijuana, my discussion of it was not well received. I seemed to have touched a raw nerve by mentioning such an unseemly issue (the adaptive role of marijuana production by the most feared and despised segment of Vincentian society – poor, young, uneducated black men) in such polite company (a wealthy and well-educated, mainly middle-aged and disproportionately female audience of about two hundred people). Indeed, my paper probably did look like an open sore against the backdrop of the many genteel presentations dealing with botanic gardens and pristine forests. I was criticized for wandering from the conference theme and for both "romanticizing" and "exaggerating" the role of marijuana in the country's economy. I did not consider any of these assertions as being valid. The theme of the interdisciplinary conference – "Environmental Institutions" – was so broad that it would have been nearly impossible to stray from it (though several papers tried as hard as they could to do so by not even mentioning SVG in their presentations). "Romanticizing" marijuana consisted of traditional ethnographic description in which marijuana was treated as a farm crop, albeit a peculiar one. "Exaggeration" involved surmising that marijuana might be the second most important national export crop following bananas, a suggestion partly based on quantitative material from and briefings by the SSU. Though a couple of Vincentians came to my defense, the differential levels of audience applause by supporters and detractors showed that I had far more of the latter than the former (Rubenstein 1995).

My position was soon vindicated. "[T]he three-part US[Drug Enforce-

ment Agency]-assisted eradication effort in October 1991 and January and February 1992 which destroyed over 2 million plants" (Bureau of International Narcotics Matters 1994:213) in the remote northwestern forested interior of the mainland not only confirmed that my speculations about marijuana production were far too conservative – ganja, not bananas, was the king of crops in the country – but represented a Rubicon in Vincentian eradication efforts.

Part of my marijuana research had involved documenting the mainstream Vincentian position on ganja, and my conference experience merely reinforced what I had already learned from other sources, including the written views of members of the general public and the local medical and para-medical community. The best-known opponent of ganja use was the most respected member of the national medical establishment, Dr. A. Cecil Cyrus, a general surgeon and ophthalmologist, who reported his views in four newspaper articles and in a specially-commissioned Lions Club booklet (Cyrus 1986) that is still being widely distributed. Though the referencing in the booklet was sketchy, I was able to track down most of the studies referred to by Cyrus. All were based on outdated research and, with the possible exception of lung damage, had had their findings debunked or questioned on methodological or other grounds many years before (Rubenstein 1995).

My study of the scientific literature and how it had been misinterpreted in SVG, my experience at the 1991 conference, the recurrent accusations of spying, the memory of the feelings generated by the 1989 ganja raid on my apartment, and my aversion to the prejudicial treatment of the *ganja man* in this class- and racially-stratified society slowly forced me to reexamine the ethical implications of my fieldwork. By mid-1992 I concluded that it was time to simultaneously address these issues by offering a public cultural critique of the distorted mainstream Vincentian view on ganja. Hence, the following letter to the publisher of *The Vincentian*:

I am writing to express an interest in producing [without remuneration] a regular column on the use of drugs in SVG for your newspaper ... Your newspaper has been a good source of public opinion and ... I suspect that a regular column would attract a strong readership and provoke a good deal of lively exchange ... I have found that there is a great deal of misinformation about drugs – especially ganja – that is part of the public collective conscience in SVG. When I look at some of the statements that have appeared in *The Vincentian* it is like stepping back 50 years regarding what is actually known about marijuana. But I have no particular axe to grind, either personal or professional ... My aim would be to present the evidence that I and others have collected, especially in regard to illegal drugs, in as objective a fashion as possible.

I did indeed have several personal and professional axes to grind: frustration that my academic publications were only accessible to a tiny portion of SVG's 110,000 people; guilt over my First World career-driven parasitic-like relation to the country; and the charges of spying. But the main stimulus for the column was a combined moral-intellectual aversion to the way marijuana was treated in the local print media and by the local (para-)medical community and how this rationalized the stigmatization and punishment of the *ganja man*.

FROM LEARNED JOURNAL TO TABLOID JOURNALISM, 1992-94¹⁴

I approached writing the column with some trepidation, not because I had any fear of compromising my informants or my future research in SVG, but because all of my writing had been confined to scholarly outlets. I felt much more secure about the ethical stance informing the column: that it was wrong to misuse science to harass and incarcerate people for involvement with a victimless and relatively innocuous activity. In particular, my decision to write the column was based on a conflation of three domains of understanding: my reading of the scientific literature, my personal sense of right and wrong, and the moral position of my ganja-involved informants. It was because the establishment position was *both* bad science and bad morals (from *both* my perspective and those of my ganja-involved informants) that I decided to act. Had the mainstream Vincentian model paralleled the scientific one but was morally wrong (either in terms of my ethics or those of the *ganja man* or both) or vice versa, I would not have asked to write the column. In particular, had most cannabis devotees believed that the police were right to crack down on marijuana (in fact, a few did), and even had I concluded that this was based on false consciousness, I would have had difficulty "going public." Conversely, since the position of my informants (whose authority was experience) closely matched my position (whose authority was my fieldwork results and the evidence of First World scientific marijuana research), I found it easy to justify addressing the Vincentian public. Though this may smack of situational ethics, it also suggests that the practice of making moral decisions of this kind are usually (rightly or wrongly) grounded not in logic, method, or theory but in the exigencies of particular cases.

Readers of *The Vincentian*, a tabloid-style newspaper, had long been treated to a steady stream of information about ganja: stories of major eradication efforts; reports of police bribery; news of big seizures at the

airport; excerpts from anti-drug addresses by politicians and members of the judiciary; summaries of First World marijuana medical research findings; reports about the large number of "marijuana addicts" admitted to the mental hospital; synopses of drug seminars held in the region; and highlights from local drug abuse rallies. This varied and extensive negative coverage – more than one item per month (in a weekly paper) for the entire twenty-six-year period, 1969 and 1992, and nearly one per week between 1987 and 1992 alone – served to both reflect and create public opinion against marijuana (Rubenstein 1995; cf. Carter 1980:37).

Letters to the editor have referred to "hopeless failures," "hideous drug addictions," "frustration, depression and a sense of hopelessness among users," and people being "mentally destroyed" or "enslaved by their addiction to marijuana." It has been claimed that marijuana use "inevitably destroys, maims, and permanently distorts the intellect, the bodies and the morality of its participants," that "The amount of vagrants on our streets today [because of marijuana addiction] are numberless," that "A large number of gruesome crimes committed are drug-linked in some way," that "The crime rate is on the increase, 93% of which is drug related," and that "the illicit use of drugs is causing our homes, society, states, nations and the world on the whole to crumble." One editorial called "addiction" to marijuana "the new slavery" and others tried to link ganja to violent criminal behavior and pornography.

The aim of my column, which consisted of forty-six articles (nearly 53,000 words) that appeared between December 1992 and June 1994 under the title "The Drug Dilemma," was to counter these hysterical and spurious claims about marijuana, assertions that legitimized what I believed was the arbitrary harassment, improper detention, and unjust imprisonment of thousands of poor Vincentian youth and young men.

Four articles overviewed marijuana production, sale, and consumption in SVG; six described its origin and spread; five surveyed twenty-six years of its treatment in newspaper reports, editorials, and letters to the editor; four summarized the results of a national questionnaire on drugs I administered in 1988; five assessed the most recent scientific evidence about ganja's alleged or potential adverse effects; and twenty-three detailed marijuana production, sale, and consumption in Leeward Village.

The views and experiences of the *ganja men* were presented in their own words. A small sample from a couple of domains (using a modified orthography from the one employed in the column to make the men's Creole English voices more understandable to standard English users) show how antithetical these were to mainstream assertions.

On addiction: IO: "I have been smoking for a while [sixteen years] and I have never got hook on the habit. I could do without it."

On physical damage: XQ: "A man could smoke but you have to know how you smoking. The smoke not go up there for touch your lung. It not touch there. Doctor does tell too much a whole heap of lie. Doctor does print a whole heap of thing and show you ass."

On criminality: IO: "It's not a habit where you have to kill a man or you have to break [into] somebody's house to get money to buy it. *Herb* is not leading you into other habits so as to break people house to get money to buy it, or to break a bank or something."

On the work ethic: CP: "Them say when you smoke weed that you lazy. But other people [non-smokers] who lazy [too]. Because when I wake up this morning I smoke a weed up a bush and do real work. Weed does make you work plenty. You not want stop. You get different feelings in a you."

On medicinal uses: XB: "My man [friend] used to say since he start to drink that ganja tea he start to shit pretty, pretty, pretty like gold. He used to shit black shit, ugly shit. It clean him out. From the time he start to just drink ganja tea, that man just get clean out. Ganja is a good medicine. Is the healing of the nation. That is a herb that we should take care of."

On mental illness: XB: "If you check the majority of people in the mental hospital, this madness have to come from them roots. It were there from creation."

One column specifically challenged the widespread middle-class and elite idea that marijuana farmers are lazy people looking for a quick and easy dollar and five treated the *tribulation* context, the fact that involvement with ganja produces *cut down* (the destruction of ganja crops by the police or personal adversaries), *rip-off* (the theft of growing, harvested, or processed ganja), *unfairness* and *robbery* (being taken advantage of, exploited, or tricked in some ganja transaction or arrangement, sometimes accompanied by a fear or threat of physical violence), and *fight down* (actual physical violence sometimes accompanied by the use of weapons). These five columns served to balance the other material – to show that there were many negative features (albeit products of interdiction rather than consumption) that accompanied involvement with marijuana – and to suggest that though I was critical of the dominant societal beliefs about and reactions to cannabis and those involved with it, I was not promoting the growing or smoking of marijuana.

The last piece in the series, titled "The Case for and against Marijuana" directly confronted what I considered the most pernicious feature of the societal treatment of marijuana, the Vincentian self-righteous opposition to it:

If marijuana is less harmful than tobacco or alcohol, if its proven deleterious effects are few and far between, and if it has several possible therapeutic functions,¹⁵ then why is there so much opposition to it in this

country? ... [G]anja use in SVG, associated as it is with Rastafarianism, is a symbol of rebelliousness and alienation. As such it represents a threat to the existing socio-economic status quo and a repudiation of our mainstream British-derived values and mores. How have "respectable" Vincentians reacted to this threat? I will never forget the late Hudson K. Tannis' [the Deputy Prime Minister] bald assertion to me in July 1980 – he was the second most powerful politician in the land at the time – that: "I hate to see Rastas!"

But ganja is not only the Rasta symbol par excellence. It is also associated with the most disadvantaged and despised sector of Vincentian society: the Black, rural, undereducated youth. American drug researcher Dr. Norman Zinberg's [1976] statement that 'our [U.S.] drug policy is based on morals, not on health considerations' applies equally to SVG. Current Vincentian drug attitudes and policies are a product of elite and middle class morality reinforced by United States diplomatic pressure. Marijuana smoking in SVG is very much a matter of class and respectability. Though there are many secret elite and middle class smokers, they form a much smaller class-segment than their "bad boy" lower-class counterparts, most of whom smoke their ganja openly and unselfconsciously. Not unexpectedly, some of the severest critics of marijuana smoking are those not far removed from their own rural lower-class background ...

In his Lions Club booklet Dr. Cyrus claims that "There are those in our society who think and state that marijuana causes no harm; one man in a very important position was heard to declare publicly that it only makes people happy, and does no harm. This is irresponsible and dangerous dogma." Equally irresponsible and dangerous is the dogmatic declaration that marijuana is a "heinous indulgence" engaged in by "weird, unkempt creatures."¹⁶ ... No responsible researcher would argue that marijuana has been proven to be a completely harmless substance. But this is surely not the same as saying that marijuana causes relatively little harm, especially if smoked in moderation, a position that scores of drug researchers endorse. For two decades now the Vincentian public has been treated to lies, half truths, and hyperbole about marijuana. This bombardment is irresponsible and dangerous because when actual or potential ganja smokers discover that the medical community has been fooling them about marijuana, they laugh off their pronouncements on other drugs, including alcohol, cocaine and heroin.¹⁷

CONCLUSION: ANTHROPOLOGY FOR THE OTHER

Thirty years ago Jongmans and Gutkind (1967:v-vi) complained that:

Existing literature offers little data on how anthropologists carried out their research. The last forty years hundreds of monographs have been published, yet a careful study of them reveals that at least sixty percent of the authors make no mention whatever of the methodology employed; perhaps another twenty percent devote a few lines, or two or three paragraphs, to this important topic; while only the remaining twenty percent

give us some clear idea about how they carried out their research; this is hardly a satisfactory situation.

Though a perusal of the scores of ethnographies in my personal library suggests that this situation has not improved dramatically since 1967, the same does not hold for the literature devoted to the art and science of ethnographic fieldwork which has grown tremendously in the last three decades.¹⁸ Few of these works, however, have much to say about research and publication reflexivity: how topics are selected for study; the contest between research plans and the serendipitous nature of the fieldwork experience; and how this dialectic influences the reporting of research results.

There are several reasons why Caribbean ethnographers (or other social science fieldworkers) have never paid much attention to detailing how they develop their research problems. First, the positivist orientation that still dominates the social sciences (despite complaints from some self-proclaimed “empiricists” who believe that the post-modern “interpretivists” are taking over their disciplines) means that field research is supposed to take place to fill in obvious descriptive gaps in the literature. Accordingly, it is expected (or assumed) that researchers should (or do) go to the field with clearly developed and circumscribed research projects that have been carefully scrutinized by granting agencies or other bodies (such as ethical review committees). Second, the accumulation of a rich body of empirical material since the late nineteenth century for so many socio-cultural systems in nearly every “culture area” of the world, including the Caribbean, means that contemporary ethnographic and allied research are increasingly concerned with testing theoretical formulations, not with collecting large bodies of new or unique data. Third, the eschewal of autobiography – at least in regard to problem selection and development – in most descriptive field studies leaves the impression that the generation of research programs and procedures is a more or less mechanical process. So does the paucity of discussions of projects that failed either because of poor problem selection, faulty methodology, or researcher incompetence. As my experience in SVG suggests, none of these considerations apply very well to the unanticipated study of aberrant or illicit behavior, on activities that may bring risk to the researcher and/or researched.¹⁹

Nor is there much if anything in the methodological literature about the relation between collecting primary data and communicating its results to native readers in ways that are accessible to them. In *When They Read What We Write* (Brettell 1993:3), “what we write” is nearly always a specialized monograph that few Third World readers could (or would want

to) understand and “when” is almost always after an accidental discovery that yet another foreign academic has produced yet another esoteric misrepresentation of local lifeways (Rubenstein 1995). Nearly all of the papers in the collection treat the narrow issue of “when the natives talk back” (Brettell 1993:9) – react negatively to what has been written about them – leaving untouched the possibility of a direct and proactive interchange with the Other (or with *their* Other in societies stratified by class, ethnicity, and/or race).

My cultural critique – my “experiment” with ethnography as journalism – tried to answer these criticisms. To be sure, my field situation in SVG may not be shared with most other researchers, many of whom may rightly claim that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for them to replicate my efforts. (But how many have tried?) Yes, my marriage to a Vincentian has given me citizenship in the country and a nearly unconstrained right to do fieldwork, I have been doing long-term research there for twenty-five years, SVG has a free press and parliamentary democracy, there is a well-established tradition of social criticism, the present government is much more open to foreign academic research than the previous one, and illegal substances – those exemplars of transnationalism – have been hotly contested in public for over twenty years. But these features only made it is easier to go public.

The decision to do so was rooted in the traditions of anthropology: an aversion to bad science (whether social or physical) and a compassion for unjustly persecuted peoples (Valentine 1968:188-89). Long ago Hymes (1974:5, my italics) argued that “People everywhere today, especially (and rightly) third world peoples, increasingly resist being subjects of inquiry, *especially for purposes not their own*; and anthropologists increasingly find the business of inquiring and knowing about others a source of dilemmas.” My response (part catharsis, part confessional, and part intellectual engagement) to these dilemmas was to write to and for a Third World people for purposes that were very much their own. If other Caribbeanists, especially those residing outside the region, wish to answer the often whispered charges that they are preoccupied with Western academic careerism (the only First World “credit” for producing the column is its discussion in academic publications like this one), are indifferent to the actual (as opposed to “textual”) fate of the oppressed Antillean peoples they study, or even lack the moral courage to speak out on contentious issues, they will have to find new and more imaginative ways to bring their research findings back to their source.

NOTES

1. Trouillot (1992:20) defends the omission of wage-labor migration because it is a topic that has "generated many solid studies and deserve[s] separate treatment" but makes no mention of illegal drugs.
2. "Strong circumstantial evidence suggests that the multipurpose use of cannabis was introduced to the British West Indies by indentured laborers from India, the first of whom arrived in Trinidad and Guyana in 1844 and in Jamaica in 1845" (Rubin & Comitas 1975:15-16).
3. Comitas 1975; Rubin 1975; Schaeffer 1975; Dreher & Rogers 1976; Dreher 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1989.
4. For example, they tend to uncritically equate illegal drug use with drug abuse or addiction.
5. See Zinberg 1976; Grinspoon 1977; Auld 1981; Himmelstein 1983; Kleiman 1989; Nadelmann 1989; Alexander 1990; Beauchesne 1991; Brownstein 1992; Grinspoon & Bakalar 1993; Elwood 1994. The momentum against the international war against drugs is growing. Days before the United Nations announced its most ambitious – and costly – anti-drug program ever, hundreds of influential persons, including former UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, presented a grounded-breaking petition to the UN General Assembly in which they stated that: "We believe that the global war on drugs is causing more harm than drug abuse itself ... Human rights are violated, environmental assaults perpetuated and prisons inundated with hundreds of thousands of drug law violators. Scarce resources better expended on health, education and economic development are squandered on ever more expensive interdiction efforts" (*Winnipeg Free Press* 1998:A1-A2).
6. The nation is composed of the mainland (St. Vincent Island; 344 km²), which contains over 90 percent of the population, and the 44 km² Grenadines, a chain of tiny islands which stretch from the main island to neighboring Grenada to the South.
7. This is literally true because many chronic ganja users quit smoking as soon as they get married as a sign of respect for their wives and new status.
8. In Leeward Village, as elsewhere in SVG, adherence to the tenets of Rastafarianism is mainly confined to a dreadlocks hairstyle, involvement with ganja, the use of Rastafarian jargon, and a preoccupation with reggae music.
9. EC\$1.00 is equivalent to US\$0.42.
10. Indeed, the summer of 1986 represented the apex of valley cultivation in the number of people growing marijuana, the number of teams of growers, and the extent of cultivation. The death, raids, and imprisonments prompted many ganja farmers, especially those only marginally involved, to either pull up their immature plants or abandon their gardens. Again, the implications of this were not clear to me until the next year.
11. My reply to the police superintendent was that I had not entered the property where the raid had taken place, that I thought I had the public right to record a public event, that it was not my purpose to embarrass or interfere with the police, and that the

photos would complement and highlight the other research material I had collected (including many photographs of ganja gardens).

12. The police have few resources to do much intelligence work of their own. This is of no great moment since they are kept busy enough following up on reports made by ordinary citizens against acquaintances, neighbors, and enemies involved in marijuana growing and selling. The raid on my apartment, then, was not a random event but resulted from a report by a village informer to the authorities in Kingstown. Such are the perils of long-term research in the same community, on the one hand, and studying illegal drugs, on the other (see Bourgois 1995:19-27).

13. Active participants included the Governor-General, who gave the opening address, and the Prime Minister, who delivered the keynote presentation.

14. A fuller discussion of the issues in this section is found in Rubenstein 1995.

15. These were mentioned in several of the columns and was the topic of two or three of them.

16. "Weird, unkempt creatures," the term used by Cyrus in his Lion's Club booklet, was a thinly veiled allusion to the long and thickly platted hair of Rastafarians.

17. *The Vincentian*, June 24, 1994.

18. Indeed, there is a fundamental contradiction between a preoccupation with methodology in the abstract and its integration with the actual conduct of ethnographic projects. According to Holy (1984:13): "In contrast [to research in the natural sciences], social sciences abound in methodological treatises, courses in methodology form a considerable part of the curriculum, a social scientist could hardly qualify without passing examinations in methodology, his or her own research will hardly be of interest to fellow practitioners if it is not methodologically significant, and the practitioner's status within the professional community is directly proportional to contributions to the development of the subject's methodology: a single methodological treatise is bound to bring more fame and prestige than several published results of empirically oriented research."

Though these observations may hold in such social sciences as sociology, psychology, and geography they hardly correspond to the situation in cultural anthropology. Despite the abundance of methodological works, most ethnographers have had little more than a single textbook course in field methods; second, contemporary ethnographies continue to be marked by a paucity of data on research procedures. Finally, the highest standing in the field has always been held by those who have made the most significant empirical contributions.

19. See, for example, Humphreys 1970; Weppner 1977; Carter 1980; Lieber 1981; Fields 1984; Adler 1985; Williams 1989, 1993; Bourgois 1995.

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SCRAPPING MAROON HISTORY: BRAZIL'S PROMISE, SURINAME'S SHAME

From Canada in the north to Argentina in the south, every nation in the Americas now provides special legal protection for its indigenous (and, where relevant, Maroon) populations—except the Republic of Suriname.

The history of Maroons in the Americas has always been linked to land. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century treaties between Maroons and colonial powers in Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Suriname, and elsewhere demarcated geographical zones of freedom, under the full control of the Maroons, in return for a cessation of hostilities.¹ Collective control of territory (for agriculture, gathering, hunting, and fishing) also meant control over space in which to develop an autonomous culture. In Jamaica and Suriname, which had the largest enduring Maroon populations, the spirit of these treaties was generally respected well into the second half of the twentieth century. Indeed in Jamaica, independence brought a renewed legislative recognition of Maroon collective rights to land, and Maroon history has been officially consecrated by the state as a heroic chapter of Jamaican history. But in the pre-independence Suriname of the 1960s, the colonial government in collaboration with Alcoa summarily dispossessed some six thousand Saramaka Maroons of lands that had been guaranteed under the eighteenth-century treaty in order to construct a hydroelectric dam and lake. And since Suriname's independence in 1975, successive governments have been pursuing an increasingly militant and destructive policy against both Maroons and indigenous communities, stripping of them of their rights to land (and its potential riches) and endangering their rights to exist as separate peoples.

Since the devastating civil war between the national army of Suriname and the Maroons (1986-92, begun during the military dictatorship of Desi Bouterse), in which many hundreds of Maroon civilians were killed and fundamental Maroon rights repeatedly violated (see Polimé & Thoden van Velzen 1988), the Suriname government has been asserting the state's claim to all of the country's interior. The government insists that under Suriname law, neither Maroons nor indigenous peoples hold any special rights and that "the interests of the total development of the country"—which increasingly means the private interests of government officials and their cronies—must prevail (Price 1995). Recent reports by N.G.O. observers describe a grim situation.²

[August 21, 1996] The Saramaka Maroon community of Nieuw Koffiekamp faces forced relocation to make way for a multinational gold mine, being developed by Golden Star Resources of Denver, Colorado, and Cambior Inc. of Montreal. The Maroon community is disputing the relocation and demanding that the companies negotiate with them as the traditional owners of the land. Golden Star has erected a number of gates and other devices, including a huge earth wall, to restrict the movements of community members on their lands, denying them access to their agricultural plots, hunting grounds and religious sites. Suriname police and company security forces have established a presence and collaborate closely. Indeed, the head of Golden Star's security is the commanding officer of the police detachment at the Gros Rosebel mine and has armed Golden Star security personnel with police issue weapons. A unit of the heavily-armed, elite, anti-terrorist Police Support Group has also been stationed at the site. The security officers have threatened, harassed and intimidated community members. On a number of different occasions, patrols have shot live ammunition at or over the heads of Nieuw Koffiekampers, even those engaged in tending their agricultural plots and gathering forest foods.³

[March 6, 1997] On February 24, 1997, Jules Wijdenbosch, President of Suriname, announced his government's intention to seek financing for the construction of two hydroelectric dams on the Kabelebo River in West Suriname. As presently conceived, the plan is to construct two dams that will provide power for bauxite mining, gold mining, timber processing, and other unspecified activities. Estimated costs for the dams are one billion US dollars. For financing, Suriname is looking to Brazil, the private sector, and possibly the World Bank. The President reports that recent high-level visits to Brazil concerning the Kabelebo project have been positive and that a group of Brazilian investors has shown a great deal of interest in building the dams. Chairman of the ruling National Democratic Party, Desi Bouterse, is presently in China to discuss, among others, the Kabelebo project. [Suriname newspaper] *De Ware Tijd* (March 4) stated that China's Minister of Foreign Affairs "welcomed the idea of a joint Suriname-Brazil-China Kabelebo project." Discussion of the Kabelebo project comes in the midst of a concerted effort on the part of

the Surinamese government to decrease its dependence on traditional donors, the Netherlands and Belgium in particular, and to seek business relationships and support in Latin America . . . The present government is also related to the former military dictatorship which ruled Suriname in the 1980s and had a good relationship with the military in Brazil, who are a major force in Brazilian industry. A cooperation agreement has been discussed regarding the exploration, exploitation, production and marketing of gold, a fact that is sure to intensify the region's ongoing gold rush. Possible joint ventures with Brazilian and Surinamese businesses was also discussed. This would provide Brazil with tariff free access to the CARICOM (Caribbean Community) market and Suriname access to the MERCOSUR trading block. Certain confidential matters were also discussed in the meetings. Suriname continues to routinely disregard Indigenous and Maroon rights when resource exploitation is at issue. The government states that private investors in the Kabelebo project will have full ownership rights to the land near and around the dams, but it refuses to recognize Indigenous and Maroon land rights in any form and frequently states that it is impossible to do so because Surinamese law dictates that the State is the sole owner of all land in Suriname. It would appear that the government is willing to make exceptions to this when it suits them.⁴

[April 20, 1998] The leaders of twenty-three Saramaka Maroon villages gathered in the community of Piki Seei on 13-14 March, 1998, to discuss land rights and the incursions of a Chinese logging company. The village leaders stated unequivocally that they were opposed to the operations of the Chinese company, NV Tacoba (a.k.a. Tacoba Forestry Consultants) in or near their ancestral lands and that they want their rights to own and control their ancestral lands, as defined by international human rights law, fully recognized. The present government of Suriname states that it has no legal obligations under the [eighteenth-century] treaties with the Maroons and does not recognize their rights to own their ancestral lands. Furthermore, it has granted, or is in the process of granting, vast areas of the rainforest in concession to multinational logging and mining companies. These concessions are granted without notifying Indigenous and Maroon communities, let alone seeking their participation or approval, even when their villages fall within the concessions. Presently, at least two-thirds of the Indigenous and Maroon communities [home to more than 50,000 people] are either in or very near to logging and mining concessions. The Saramaka leaders first became aware that a concession had been granted in their territory when a group of "English-speaking Chinese" arrived in the communities of Nieuw Aurora and Guyaba, informing the communities that they were about to begin logging operations. The communities later discovered that Tacoba and other logging companies had been granted multiple logging concessions in and near their territory. An Indonesian company, Barito Pacific, is also rumored to be acquiring a concession of 600,000 hectares covering Saramaka and Ndyuka Maroon territories, from central Suriname to the Marowijne River. Barito representatives recently visited the area (Jai Kreek) accompanied by Suriname national army troops and helicopters,

carrying a letter signed personally by the President of Suriname. Apparently, a deal with Barito was signed while the President of Suriname was in Indonesia last September. None of these concessions have been approved by the National Assembly. Little is known about NV Tacoba, although it is suspected that they are a Chinese state-owned company, locally incorporated in Suriname. Tacoba is also known to have relations with the former military dictator, Desi Bouterse, himself active in the timber business as a third party buyer, and with other members of Suriname's ruling party, the National Democratic Party. Suriname recently opened an embassy in China and has been seeking expanded trade and aid relations. Tacoba seems to be the first major Chinese investment in Suriname. One of Tacoba's concessions encompasses the Saramaka community of Duwata. Reportedly, Tacoba representatives told the village leader that his community was no longer allowed to use the forest beyond one kilometer from the village, as the area was now a Tacoba concession. Presently, all land in the interior of the country (approximately 80%) is classified as state land and indigenous peoples and Maroons are considered to be occupiers of state land without rights or title thereto. If their subsistence activities conflict with logging or mining operations, the latter take precedence as a matter of law. Furthermore, Suriname law does not provide any mechanism for consulting with communities about the granting of concessions on or near their territories. International human rights standards provide that indigenous peoples and Maroons have the right to participate fully in decisions, before they are taken, about whether concessions are granted on their lands. This right includes the right to information concerning the proposed activities, the companies involved, and the nature of the risks posed by the activity. Matawai Maroons now have to import water from the coast because their rivers and creeks have been polluted by miners, and they report catching fish with soapy, white eyes and tumors.⁵

Concerned anthropologists—almost all foreign nationals, and many sufficiently outspoken critics of the Suriname military regime so that they feel less than welcome in the country—have been unable to do much more than bear witness to the recent devastation and abuse of human rights. Given power relations within the country, it is unclear who will have the courage and the means to come to the aid of Maroons and Indians in their struggle to preserve their identity as distinct peoples. What seems to be needed is rapid legislation, to bring Suriname's constitution and legal code in line with the various human rights and ecological conventions to which the country is already party (and which would give Maroons and Indians a significant measure of autodetermination), and a realization by the government that its treatment of Maroons and indigenous peoples gives Suriname the shameful distinction of being "the only state in the western hemisphere in which indigenous peoples [and Maroons] live that does not in some way legally recognize their rights to own their ancestral

territories.”⁶ To students of Afro-America, the Suriname Maroons have long stood as a symbol of heroic resistance and a leading exemplar of long-term diasporic cultural creativity. Yet the Republic of Suriname has clearly undertaken a unilateral program to abrogate the Maroons’ eighteenth-century treaties and to erase the historic accomplishments of these largest surviving Maroon groups in the Americas.⁷ In the case of Suriname, scrapping Maroon history is tantamount to ethnocide.

In February 1998, when Sally Price and I arrived in Salvador, Brazil, for a semester of teaching on Fulbright Fellowships, the land rights of Suriname Maroons were very much on our minds. If we hadn’t already known it, the T.V. news quickly made clear that related concerns were making front-page headlines in Brazil as well. Nearly nightly we saw pictures of Kiriri men in war-paint confronting Bahian settlers who had established homes and schools within the bounds of the Indian reservation, views of banner-carrying *sem-terras* camped out on the doorstep of government buildings in Brasília, and menacing images of vigilante militias in the state of São Paulo, armed to the teeth and mounted on horses, Chevy Blazers, or the occasional Mercedes-Benz, determined to protect their *fazendas* from roaming bands of rural squatters. One could not live in 1990s Brazil and remain unaware of fierce struggles over rights to land.

We soon learned that Afro-Brazilians hold a special position in these struggles. Since 1988—the centenary of the abolition of slavery—members of many rural black communities have had unique legal claims to land. The organized Black Movement, with the support of numerous academics, was successful, during the debates that led up to the promulgation of Brazil’s new federal constitution, in assuring the inclusion of three articles. Articles 215 and 216 (“Da Cultura”) officially recognize the contribution of “black groups” to the nation’s cultural patrimony and guarantee the exercise of “Afro-Brazilian cultural practices” (in particular, Candomblé and other religions). And Article 68 states that “The definitive property rights of *remanecentes* [“remnants”] of quilombos that have been occupying the same lands are hereby recognized, and the State shall grant them titles to such lands.”⁸

This latter law opened a can of worms that, for the last decade, has spilled over into the laps of anthropologists, historians, lawyers, agronomists, and human rights and ecological organizations, as well as diverse others who have been working, with community members, to help secure their title to land. For, despite the existence of hundreds of maroon communities in Brazil during the era of slavery (including, of course, the great seventeenth-century quilombo of Palmares), present-day Brazil is not

home to the kinds of maroon societies—with clear historical continuities to slave-era rebel communities and with deep historical consciousness and semi-independent political organization—that still flourish in other parts of the Americas (Jamaica, Suriname, French Guiana, and Colombia). The excellent collection *Liberdade por um fio: História dos quilombos no Brasil* (Reis & dos Santos Gomes 1996), while including several chapters on Palmares, devotes most of its 500-plus pages to demonstrating the variety and geographical spread of other such communities in Brazil—detailed maps show, for example, the remarkable density of quilombos in eighteenth-century Minas (where there were some 160 documented villages), in Mato Grosso, in the area of Rio de Janeiro, in Maranhão, and elsewhere. However, seventeen of the book's eighteen chapters deal with quilombos that were destroyed well before the abolition of slavery, and a more general review of the historiography makes clear that, in a comparative hemispheric context, Brazil's ruling classes were singularly successful in destroying the country's hundreds (or more likely thousands) of historical quilombos. At the moment of abolition, the great majority of quilombos that were still extant were recently formed, and most of these later melted into the surrounding populations.

Throughout Brazil today, in what were once economically marginal areas, one finds hamlets of Afro-Brazilians traditionally referred to as *comunidades negras rurais* (rural black communities) or *terras de preto* (lands belonging to blacks). Their origins are varied—some were formed by slaves (or former slaves) after the bankruptcy of a fazenda or plantation in the confusing decades surrounding abolition, some involved gifts of land by masters to ex-slaves, purchases of lands by freed slaves (who in some cases had bought their own freedom), grants of land to slaves who had performed military service in time of war, or gifts of land to slaves by religious orders. In a few cases (particularly in the lower Amazon region), they include actual descendants of quilombos formed near the end of the slave era or perhaps even earlier. What these communities of diverse origins share, besides their "blackness," is a many-decades-long residence on a territory that they exploit (usually by hunting, fishing, and swidden horticulture) without subdividing and without official title.

It is these communities—most of which have no traditions (either in written documents or in oral testimony) connecting them directly to historical quilombos—that, during the past decade, have in many cases entered the legal battleground as candidates for inclusion in the privileged circle of *remanescentes de quilombos*. Although by 1995, when the first national meeting of *remanescentes de quilombos* was held in Brasília, not a single such community had been formally recognized by the state, the

movement began achieving small but symbolically important successes soon after. (By 1996, one inventory of potential communities that fit the bill included more than 500⁹ and another postulated "at least 2000 Black communities in Brazil today which can claim to descend from maroon groups" [Carvalho 1996:451-52].)¹⁰

A similar diachronic pattern describes most of the relevant cases—what Maria de Lourdes Bandeira (1988:32) has called "an ethnic drama in three acts"—"the whites leave for elsewhere, the blacks create an egalitarian community, the whites return and the blacks resist." The "return of the whites" during the past decade or two has taken various forms, including the expansion into previously marginal areas by lumber, mining, and agro-business companies, hydroelectric projects, and private developers. And the affected rural black communities have now added the judicial/anthropological mode of resistance to all those quieter, less visible forms of resistance that they called upon to maintain themselves in the past.

The remainder of this essay reviews a selection of the recent work on *remanescentes de quilombos*, which often uses research on Suriname and other Caribbean Maroon communities as explicit or implicit models. Although the situation of *remanescentes* and Suriname Maroons are in many respects different, Brazil's legal pledge of solidarity may provide crucial lessons for her northern neighbor. And a review of the experience may also be of interest to students of slavery unfamiliar (as was I until recently) with the ongoing battle in Brazil over the meaning of "quilombo" and the meaning, more generally, of forms of black resistance, in slavery and after.¹¹

O Quilombo do Rio das Rãs (Carvalho et al. 1996) may serve as point of departure, as it adopts a comparative perspective in its militancy for the public recognition of the struggle of rural black Brazilian communities for visibility and human rights. In the book's first section, anthropologist José Jorge de Carvalho presents a seventy-three-page overview of maroon communities in the Americas, modeled in part on my own *Maroon Societies*. Suriname Maroons, especially the Saramaka, take pride of place and information from *First-Time* and *Alabi's World* is liberally appropriated, sometimes with citations.¹² Haitian, Jamaican, Colombian, Cuban, and Venezuelan Maroons then get their due before the author turns to an overview of maroon communities in Brazil.

Carvalho believes he has identified a central difference between Brazilian and other American slave societies—the utter lack, in Brazil (in contrast, for example, to Suriname), of a generalized structural opposition between maroons and slaves, the lack of a discursive tradition that

contrasts maroons and slaves (Carvalho et al. 1996:48).¹³ He goes on to argue—drawing on Afro-Brazilian cults as well as everyday discourse—that, in general, Brazilians construct the image of “the slave” as downtrodden, oppressed, and subservient. And he analyzes at some length the annual dramatic performance by residents of the area that was once Palmares of a play whose message is largely anti-quilombola, anti-Indian, and pro-slavery (and which may have Jesuit and other “white” origins)—the message that armed resistance never pays.¹⁴

Turning to Rio das Rãs, in the state of Bahia, Carvalho explains that its historical context was quite different from that of Palmares (or Saramaka). Without a discursive tradition of oppositionality between maroons and slaves, and with a generally “passive” model of “the slave,” the community’s chosen mode of historical resistance was non-confrontational, ruse rather than warfare, more reminiscent (he says) of the life of Esteban Montejo in Cuba than of Zumbi of Palmares. In a rhetorical move characteristic of the recent Brazilian literature, Carvalho insists that the kind of resistance adopted historically by Rio das Rãs represents an “alternative form of dignity” to the more apparently “heroic” resistance of the Saramakas—indeed, he hints that it is more “democratic” in that it isn’t racially exclusionary (anti-white).¹⁵ While fighting for its lands, he says, the community of Rio das Rãs embraces the idea of “universal brotherhood,” incorporating in its religion, for example, the figures of Indians, Africans, Slaves, and Whites (in the form of Jesus and Mary) (Carvalho et al. 1996:68).¹⁶

The central section of the book, by Siglia Zambrotti Doria and Carvalho, opens with a description of the violent attempt, begun in the 1970s, by Brazil’s third largest cotton company to take over the lands that include Rio das Rãs—the systematic destruction of residents’ homes and planted fields, and the community’s continued resistance. (It is interesting that the *fazendeiro* had received loans from the Interamerican Development Bank to “improve” these very lands [Carvalho 1996:428].) By 1993, the community was surrounded by armed thugs hired by the *fazendeiro*, their animals had been shot, some of their houses had been bulldozed, they had been deprived of access to their gardens and freedom of movement out of the area, and they were subsisting largely on donations from outside organizations.¹⁷ It was in this atmosphere, and with federal police protection, that the researchers undertook their investigation into the community’s ethnography and history, designed to legitimate its legal claims.

Given the particularities of its intent and circumstances, research in Rio das Rãs—and in most of the other communities under review here—takes

on characteristics different from that carried out in maroon societies elsewhere in the Americas (which has often consisted of long-term ethnographic and historical work—see, for a recent review, Price 1996:xi-xi). In a chapter assessing the Rio das Rãs project, Adolfo Neves de Oliveira Jr. catches the special flavor of such enterprises. “We were faced,” he writes,

with a black community that was not traditionally considered [by its members or by outsiders] as descended from a quilombo but which wished to redefine itself, before the courts, as being so descended. Moreover, they had no articulated oral tradition that in any way linked them to a quilombo past, except a few references to the presence of escaped slaves in the region and a generalized belief that they themselves were not descendants of slaves. In contrast to what one might expect in a quilombo, there was no evidence of any sort of oral tradition about heroic resistance. Nevertheless, oral tradition insistently described a way of life that was not compatible with that of slaves, and there was no tradition of their having been granted lands as freedmen, or anything else that could explain the presence of a black community in the region ... [On the basis of these investigations] we believe we have found the descendants of a group of runaway slaves who gathered in the region of Rio das Rãs about 150 years ago. (Carvalho et al. 1996:229-30)

We are a long way from Mooretown (Jamaica), El Palenque de San Basilio (Colombia), or Asindoo (Suriname).¹⁸

It might seem unfair to compare research undertaken explicitly to support a legal claim with more traditional “scientific” research. Nonetheless, it seems reasonable (from a comparativist perspective) to note, in almost all the studies under review, the general thinness (and brevity) of the research, the lack of textured ethnography, and the poverty of the oral testimonies. In the Rio das Rãs book, for example, one page-long interview is printed verbatim to demonstrate that the ancestors of present-day community members were always “free agriculturalists,” that they “never worked for a master,” but this discussion with a sixty-one-year-old man bears witness to the researcher’s tendency to put words into her interlocutor’s mouth, and the man himself makes clear he really can’t speak about any epoch before that of his own grandfather (Carvalho et al. 1996:121-22). In general, the investigation moves from hypothesis to hypothesis, from one tidbit of evidence to the next, building a case that rests largely on possibilities. In the end, the researchers nevertheless assert that they have “confirmed the continuous possession, since time immemorial, of the lands of Rio das Rãs by almost 300 black families” (Carvalho et al. 1996:126). As of this writing (1998), the legal claims of the Comunidade Negra de Rio das Rãs continue to move slowly through the

federal justice system, and at least another ten years is expected to pass before there is a definitive decision.¹⁹

A contrastive case is provided by the area known as "Brazilian Guiana," between the Suriname border and the Amazon, which was once home to large numbers of maroon communities (in this region usually called *mocambos*). Historical records show major military expeditions against maroon villages strung along the northern tributaries of the Amazon in 1799, 1811, 1813, 1831, 1844, 1855, and 1863, with some of these capturing more than one hundred prisoners. (The 1813 expedition included 375 men—militia, slaves, and Mundurucú Indians.) The story of these *mocambos* is partially told in Eurípedes A. Funes's unpublished dissertation, "*Nasci nas matas, nunca tive senhor*": *História e memória dos mocambos do baixo Amazonas* (1995), and summarized in his chapter in Reis & dos Santos Gomes (1996). Funes tells us that Pacoval, the contemporary community he studied in detail, was formed only in the 1870s, by people fleeing other maroon settlements in the region. The residents' essential similarities (in everything from religion to social organization) to other (non-quilombo) rural Brazilian communities, then, is explained by a lack of long-term continuity with the kind of maroon past experienced by Ndyukas or Saramakas. Reading about this community (as in the case of Rio das Rãs), I am struck by the absence of deep oral historical traditions—the slim histories collected refer to the mid-nineteenth century at the earliest (or in a few cases to generalized Africa or slavery stories of the kind that could easily have been learned from the missionaries who have been present since the founding of the town).²⁰

Funes does a good job describing slavery in the region of Santarém and Óbidos, whence maroons fled—small plantations, usually with only a handful of slaves. By the first half of the nineteenth century, the map of the region was dotted with maroon communities, located in sites very similar to those in Suriname (riverine villages above great waterfalls, many days' march from the regional capitals). Unlike the parasitic maroon communities that were common in many regions of Brazil (see Reis & dos Santos Gomes 1996), many of these Amazonian maroon villages resembled their Suriname counterparts in their distance from plantation or city and in their relative economic independence.²¹

The maroon communities of the lower Amazon as described by Funes, then, resemble their Suriname counterparts both historically and geographically—around 1800, for example, they may have shared many features—but at the same time differ from them sharply in terms of what they are like today, with those in Suriname having maintained a vast range of cultural continuities that keep their "difference" from non-maroon

communities in Suriname, and with those in Brazilian Guiana having experienced sufficiently frequent rupture and displacement so that their "continuity" as communities dates only from the second half of the last century.

Anthropologist Eliane Cantarino O'Dwyer carries the lower Amazon story further, offering a description of the current situation of descendants of quilombos in the Trombetas region (1995a). In the mid-1970s, a giant multinational center for bauxite extraction was established eighty kilometers upstream from Oriximiná, where many descendants of historic quilombos live. (Participating companies include such familiar names as Reynolds, Alcan, and Billiton, as well Norwegian and Brazilian firms; ALCOA is involved in a separate venture nearby.) The company town of Porto Trombetas was quickly constructed in the forest, with its omnipresent security guards, its supermarket, cinema, hospital, school, and administration buildings, and with regular VARIG flights into the new airport. On the river, giant foreign-flag bauxite ships now dwarf the canoes of Amerindians. Next to this new city stand more than a hundred houses inhabited by *remanescentes de quilombos*, who built them from the detritus of the town during the 1980s, when the men worked as company laborers. In the early 1990s, when these men were laid off, they found themselves unable to return to their previous subsistence activities, in large part because of the stringent efforts of Brazil's environmental protection agency (IBAMA) to guard a 385,000-hectare "biological reserve" and a "national forest" reserve of 426,000 hectares from their use. (N.B.: They and their ancestors had been making gardens and hunting and fishing in those spaces for more than a century.) The inhabitants of Boa Vista, but also the other descendants of Trombetas quilombos in the area, find themselves in direct and frequent confrontation, then, with both powerful private enterprises and the full force of the state. Indeed, Cantarino O'Dwyer argues that it is precisely this situation of confrontation that encourages the category of *remanescentes de quilombos* to emerge as a meaningful "ethnic identity" for the people of Boa Vista today.

In 1989, several thousand residents of the region (from twenty-one villages) organized themselves as the Associação das Comunidades Remanescentes de Quilombos do Município de Oriximiná and, with the help of anthropologists and other designated experts, began militating for title to land. In November 1995, the tiny community of Boa Vista became the first in all of Brazil to receive collective title to land under Article 68 of the constitution. (It is significant that the government first proposed the granting of *individual* titles to plots of land but that the community insisted on collective ownership. In November 1996, two nearby

communities, Água Fria and Pacoval (the community studied by Funes), became the second and third in the country to receive their lands under Article 68.²²

A different variant of the *remanescente* story is told in *Frechal terra de preto: Quilombo reconhecido como reserva extrativista* (Projeto Vida de Negro 1996), which describes the successful struggle of the people of Frechal, in the state of Maranhão, to have their community recognized by the state as an "Extractive Reserve" in the wake of the 1992 Rio de Janeiro U.N. Earth Summit. Funded by the Ford Foundation, Oxfam, and other such organizations, a large team of researchers, lawyers, agronomists, photographers, and others participated in the Frechal project and the production of the book. In 1994, community members joined by a host of national and international organizations occupied the offices of IBAMA in the state capital to pressure authorities to effect the expropriation of lands mandated in the 1992 presidential decree. The final judicial and administrative steps are still in process, but with every sign of the community's ultimate victory.²³

The people of Frechal call their community a quilombo, though they have no traditions that relate them to historical quilombos—their oral history recounts simply that their parents and grandparents were buried there and that they have lived there as long as anyone remembers (Projeto Vida de Negro 1996:59). As Eliane Cantarino O'Dwyer writes elsewhere (1995b:1), community spokesmen, anthropologists, and others engaged in the present struggle are clearly in the process of "resemanticizing" the word "quilombo" to cover quite generally "the present situation of black segments in different regions and contexts of Brazil ... who have an identity relating to a place and a group."²⁴ Using such criteria, the Projeto Vida de Negro, the Maranhense Society for Human Rights, and the Centro de Cultura Negra have now identified in the state of Maranhão alone "about 400 territories peopled by blacks who have an ethnic identity which goes back to slave-times."²⁵

Terra de pretos, terra de mulheres (Gusmão 1996) concerns yet another contrastive area—the seacoast south of Rio, which is being rapidly developed both for petrochemical industries and for beach-tourism. The building of the Rio-Santos highway, which split the lands of the community of Campinho da Independência in two, is only one of the recent assaults on the integrity of a group that has been settled on the same once-marginal lands for a century and a half. The second half of book's title, *Terra, mulher e raça num bairro rural negro*, refers to ethnographic realities brushed in by the author with rather broad strokes, though it does seem clear that women have formed the core of the commu-

nity's continuity, genealogically and economically, since three black women received the land as a gift from the departing *fazendeiro*. In 1995, the tricentenary of Zumbi's death, young people (like those in other parts of Brazil) took on a new identity for their community, renaming it the Quilombo Contemporâneo de Campinho da Independência.

The idea of an "ethnic drama in three acts," occurring in all corners of Brazil, was developed before anthropologists even began working for the recognition of *remanescentes*, during the study of a community with an unusual history—Vila Bela. Its story is described with unusual grace by Maria de Lourdes Bandeira (1988), in what is the best balanced historical ethnography of the books here under review.²⁶ For the second half of the eighteenth century, this colonial city—whose physical plan was laid out in Portugal—was capital of the province of Mato Grosso. By the 1820s, it had been abandoned by most of its white population (who moved to the new capital, Cuiabá, simply leaving behind many of their slaves). For the next century and a half, what had become a relatively isolated black town of a couple of thousand people, growing its own food in swidden gardens on the outskirts, managed to survive, often fighting off attacks by surrounding Amerindians. But with the arrival of a paved road, and timber, ranching, and other agrobusiness interests, the population increased by a factor of seven between 1970 and 1985. The black inhabitants of Vila Bela have been swamped by a wave of "pioneers" from other poor regions of the country who, in combination with large business interests, have taken possession of (and obtained title to) the bulk of the lands that had been used for a century and half by the residents of Vila Bela.

Article 68 is a tiny, but significant, crack in the Brazilian monolith of property rights. *Remanescentes de quilombos* have become a recognized (if numerically minuscule) category, joining indigenous peoples and the great masses of *sem-terras* in the general struggle for land redistribution in this most unequal of modern societies. At the Brazilian Anthropological Association's latest sessions on "Terra de Quilombos," anthropologists described new cases from north to south and east to west of the country—twenty-two potential communities of *remanescentes* were mentioned for the state of São Paulo alone.²⁷ Brazilian anthropologists continue to play a strong and facilitating role in the ongoing creation of neo-quilombos,²⁸ a role that grows in part of out their recent struggles on behalf of indigenous peoples,²⁹ and one that partly parallels that of U.S. and Canadian anthropologists a decade or two ago in the redefinition of what it meant to be member of a Federally recognized Indian tribe.

"Quilombo" has taken a prominent place in Brazil's rich forest of symbols, from Gilberto Gil's title song for Carlos Diegues's film *Quilombo*, or Milton Nascimento's neo-Catholic "Quilombo Mass," to such journalistic gems as "the *favela* is the child of the *quilombo*" (*Folha de São Paulo* 1995, cited in Berno de Almeida 1996:19) or the "Quilombo" bars (and "Mocambo" airport souvenir shops) that one finds in many cities.³⁰ Today, Salvador's historic center, the Pelourinho, is often referred to by members of the Black Movement as a "quilombo," though the remaining residents more often use the borrowed word "guêto" (ghetto) to refer to the area. And the most famous of all quilombos remains a fiercely contested icon. The Movimento Negro is reported to be divided over the fate of the 252 hectares set aside by the government for commemorative use on the historic site of Palmares. One proposal is to mount an "imaginative reconstruction" of Zumbi's quilombo, "stressing its African roots"; the second is to erect a massive concrete memorial, designed by Oscar Niemeyer, architect of Brasília; and the third is to transform the area into a nature park.³¹

Brazil's slave-era quilombos possess heroic histories of resistance, even if they are largely lost in shadows today.³² *Remanescentes de quilombos*, in my view, share a different heritage of quieter resistance. Now under siege by forces far beyond their control, these communities clearly need all the help they can muster. With the ongoing support of anthropologists and political action groups, there now is—thanks to Article 68 and its supporters—at least the promise of better days for Brazil's *remanescente* communities.³³

For nearly two decades, in all aspects of policy-making, Suriname has been seeking ways of using "Third-World" or "Southern-Tier" models rather than European or North American ones. Thus the relatively enlightened recent solutions to land and autonomy issues for indigenous populations in, say, Canada or for the Saami in the European Union may be less relevant to Suriname decision-makers than Brazilian practices. Given that in Suriname, unlike Brazil, Maroons represent a significant proportion of the national population—and that anthropologists are hardly needed to demonstrate their remarkable cultural/social/political "difference," which is evident to the most jaded eye—there is every reason for Suriname's policy-makers to look to their southern neighbor, and the sooner the better.³⁴

In 1994, a South American Wayampi visiting Florida was introduced to the burly, six-foot-plus Chairman of the Seminole Nation, but later insisted flatly that this man "is not an Indian."³⁵ It is safe to say, similarly, that from

the perspective of Suriname Maroons, who have always seen the world divided between “us” (heroic Maroons) and “them” (all others, including slaves and their descendants), few of the Afro-Brazilians classified as *remanescentes de quilombos* would be seen as Maroons (or quilombolas)—in the sense that Saramakas, Ndyukas, Alukus, Mooretown and Accompong people, or Palenqueros are. Nevertheless, because of the strange twists and turns of late twentieth-century history, these Brazilian “remnants” and their political allies have come to represent a powerful potential model for their Suriname cousins. Without ever eliding the differences between Suriname Maroons, whose identity remains anchored in the armed struggles of their ancestors, and Brazilian “remnants”—and without condoning careless scholarship that casually merges them in the name of political militancy—we see in the end that their fates have become intertwined. And that the phrase “Rebel Destiny,” which the Herskovitses used to characterize the Saramaka in 1934, may ultimately apply (as long as we never forget historical specificities) to both, together.

NOTES

1. Such treaties are discussed more fully in Price 1996 and analyzed in detail in Bilby 1997.
2. I summarize here, changing only an occasional word for continuity, from much longer reports available on the Internet.
3. World Rainforest Movement, Urgent Action Suriname, August 21, 1996. [Internet text.]
4. Forest Peoples Programme, Suriname Information Update, March 6, 1997. [Internet text.]
5. Forest Peoples Programme, Suriname Information Update, April 20, 1998. [Internet text.]
6. Forest Peoples Programme, Suriname Information Update, April 20, 1998 [Internet text]; see also Vernooij 1995.
7. Maroons number some 55,000 people, perhaps 12 per cent of the Suriname population. For the latest news of Saramaka resistance to the inroads of logging companies, see Forest Peoples Programme, Suriname Information Update, August 1, 1998 [Internet text].
8. The text of the law (Artigo 68 do Ato da Disposições Constitucionais Transitórias) reads in full: “Aos remanescentes das comunidades dos quilombos que estejam ocupando suas terras é reconhecida a propriedade definitiva, devendo o Estado emitir-lhes os títulos respectivos.” The 1988 legislation was pathbreaking, insofar as post-emancipation Brazil (in contrast, say, to the United States or South Africa) did not have any legal tradition of intervention into “racial” matters. For further legal details, see NUER 1996.

9. Muita briga para frente: Demarcação das terras quilombolas, November 1996. [Internet text from *Revista Sem Fronteiras* 246, p. 18.]

10. The Fundação Cultural Palmares has prepared a map, available on the Internet, that graphically represents the geographic distribution of some of these *remanescente* communities— <<http://www.minc.gov.br/fcp/new/quilom/capinter.htm>>.

11. I undertook this review at the urging of our host in Bahia, historian João Reis. The selection of books is far from comprehensive, consisting largely of works from João's personal library (as the university library was closed during most of our visit owing to a strike). I present it with all the tentativeness of a neophyte in Brazilian studies. John Collins, Flávio dos Santos Gomes, Ilka Boaventura Leite, Sally Price, and João Reis made helpful suggestions on a draft. All responsibility for errors and misunderstandings remains my own.

12. I am particularly concerned about the reproduction here of various Saramaka texts from *First-Time*, including highly powerful songs and prayers, in isolation from (and without reference to) the complex contextualization that Saramakas explicitly required as prerequisite to their being translated and printed (see Price 1983:5-30).

13. There is a strong dose of presentism in this claim of a "lack of discursive tradition." As I read the histories presented in Reis & dos Santos Gomes (1996), armed confrontations between slaves and Maroons seem to have been as common during anti-Maroon military expeditions in Brazil as they were in Suriname, and our ignorance about quilombola (or Brazilian slave) discursive traditions seems much more likely to stem from our present-day lack of knowledge about much of *anything* that say, late-eighteenth-century Brazilian quilombolas thought or said.

Carvalho similarly argues, later in the book, that Afro-Brazilian religions provide a mirror-image of Saramaka religion in that the former erase all memory of slavery and privilege an African past, while the latter erases all memory of Africa and privileges a rebel-slave past (Carvalho et al. 1996:179). Without questioning here Carvalho's generalization about Afro-Brazilian religions, I would point out his remarkable oversimplification regarding Saramakas. In my view, at least, Saramaka religion (like so much of their society) reflects quite fully the sweep of Saramaka historical experience—rather than the "amnesia" Carvalho attributes to them regarding Africa, Saramakas incorporate and explicitly commemorate both African and New World developments in their religious life, as even a cursory reading of *First-Time* or *Alabi's World* should make quite clear.

14. For a more nuanced interpretation of the *Quilombo* play, including a review of the literature and an attempt at historicization and contextualization, see D. Reis 1996.

15. It is interesting that this argument closely parallels the current revisioning of the slave past by Martiniquan writers Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant, who claim that the apparently docile but actually ruse-hidden plantation slave should replace the rebel maroon as the lead figure in Martiniquan representations of historic resistance (see Price and Price 1997). Much like the Martiniquan writers' new hero, Carvalho's (and he says Rio das Rãs') sought social invisibility as the primary means of resistance: "It was necessary for the descendants of quilombos . . . to make themselves invisible, symbolically and socially, in order to survive" (Carvalho 1997:152).

16. Writing elsewhere, Carvalho (1997:157, 154-55) waxes positively elegaic

regarding the communities allegedly created by ancestors of present-day *remanescentes*. They were “capable of integrating people of the most varied racial and ethnic origins” and constituted “the realization of a utopia of freedom, brotherhood, and autonomy.”

17. For a dramatic, journalistic account of these incidents, see James Brooke, “Brazil Seeks to Return Ancestral Lands to Descendants of Runaway Slaves” in *New York Times*, August 15, 1993, p. A12.

18. In a nuanced, sophisticated study of Cafundó, a black community in the state of São Paulo that maintains its identity in part through the use of a “Bantu” lexicon in selected social contexts, Carlos Vogt and Peter Fry (1996:269-70) ironize about the conceptual looseness of the “militant” definition of *remanescentes de quilombos*.

While inventing a past of essentialized africanisms, they are also inventing a new present, filled with consonances with that past ... They organize events, make proclamations, and create a Zumbi-based calendar for citations and references.

In 1994, residents of these communities, militants from the Movimento Negro Brasileiro, social scientists, and members of the government, meeting in Brasília ‘under the inspiration of the national hero Zumbi’ for the First National Seminar of Remanescentes de Quilombos, issued a ‘proclamation to the Brazilian people’ in which they defined the general characteristics of *comunidades remanescentes de quilombos*:

Predominantly black ethnic identity; long-term residence on the same lands; the maintenance of a geographic base common to the group; family-based and collective organization of labor; living in relative harmony with the existing natural resources.

Within this particular identity politics, the concept of quilombo gets ever broader and ever more inclusive (Vogt & Fry 1996:269-70).

From their text it seems clear that, despite the apparent fit of Cafundó within such definitions, these authors feel it important to maintain the community’s self-definition and specificity (which in fact includes no historical ties to quilombos), and to avoid “the romantic tints of a social collectivism that in fact does not exist in the community” (Vogt & Fry 1996:270).

19. Two contemporaneous publications by militant Catholic priests (Evangelista de Souza & Dechamps de Almeida 1994a and 1994b) explore similar issues pertaining to Rio das Rãs, using a combination of oral and archival documentation. Doria (1996) includes more recent analysis of the judicial process and the role of anthropologists in the case, and Steil (1998) provides a nuanced analysis of its ethnic politics.

20. Another researcher, Lúcia M. M. de Andrade, has found elderly people living in the “remnant” communities of the area who have traditions that their great-grandparents or great-great grandparents lived in the quilombo of Maravilha, which historical records show was inhabited from 1835 to 1852 (de Andrade 1995:51-52, 57). As far as I have seen, this seems to be the backward limit of present-day

collective memories among Brazilian *remanescentes*. In my view, further research among *remanescentes*, particularly in the lower Amazon region (Pará and Amapá), holds promise of uncovering occasional quilombos with even greater historical continuity, perhaps stretching back well into the eighteenth century.

21. At the same time they managed, like “isolated” maroon communities elsewhere in the Americas, to conduct significant trade with the cities, for example, growing tobacco, gathering cashews, and producing palm oil in exchange for manufactured products.

22. Quilombo de Oriximiná (Pará): Os herdeiros de Zumbi [Internet text from *Revista Sem Fronteiras* 231 (1995):22-23 and 248 (1997):12].

23. Perhaps because of the pioneering nature of the enterprise—the need to find a key that might unlock the chambers of the Brazilian legal system—the arguments used by lawyers pleading the community’s case, spelled out in detail in the book, are of the everything-but-the-kitchen-sink variety. Among the phrases used most frequently to describe the relationship between this “black community” and the surrounding natural environment are “perfectly harmonious,” “perfectly integrated,” and “traditional”—arguments that, if they smack of noble savagism, nevertheless make *relative* sense in the context of the “modern” destructive practices of agrobusinesses that commit “crimes against the environment.” The enthusiasms of this “militant” literature also lead to the occasional use of out-of-date claims. The *Frechal* book (p. 27), for example, cites Arthur Ramos’s figure of 18 million Africans brought as slaves to Brazil, while any modern historian would know that this early twentieth-century estimate exaggerates reality by a factor of more than four. (Another quilombo book, making a different kind of argument, cites a total figure of only 700,000 [Leal 1995:9]—so much for history.) And the *Rio das Rãs* book suggests that the *remanescentes de quilombos* in Oriximiná and Frechal are actually descendants of seventeenth-century quilombos (Carvalho et al. 1996:67), a claim I do not find in either of the studies of those communities themselves, and the Rio das Rãs *remanescentes* are characterized in an English-language publication with rhetoric that seems more appropriate—in my view at least—to Suriname or Jamaican Maroons, as both “maroons” and as “freedom fighters” (Carvalho et al. 1996:429-30).

24. On the concept of resemanticization, see also Alfredo Wagner Berno de Almeida’s essay in the *Frechal* book (1996). Flávio dos Santos Gomes (1996) presents a useful review of the changing “political” uses of the “quilombo” concept in twentieth-century Brazil. José Maurício Andion Arruti (1997) provides a nuanced analysis of the changing concept of “remanescentes”—first applied to indigenous groups in the early twentieth century—emphasizing the “emergent” aspect of neo-quilombos and the ongoing production of histories and identities.

25. For this quotation see Ivan R. Costa’s jacket flap for *Frechal* (Projeto Vida de Negro 1996). After completing this paper, I was kindly given by Eliane Cantarino O’Dwyer a copy of the Projeto Vida de Negro’s latest book (1998), a detailed account of the ongoing struggle to get the community of Jamary dos Pretos, in Maranhão, recognized as a “quilombo” under Article 68. That work includes the full text of the official petition for recognition (pp. 27-112) plus additional information on the community and region. Its strengths and weaknesses (e.g., the

brevity of the anthropological fieldwork—one month—on which the petition, in part, rests) fit into the pattern of the other *remanescentes* books under review. For a recent journalistic account of *remanescentes de quilombos* in Maranhão, see Amaral 1998.

26. An example of the pre-*remanescente* social science literature, this study was written as part of a broader, more purely “scientific” project at USP, strongly influenced by the São Paulo School (Bandeira 1988:13-24). Vogt & Fry 1996, an anthropological study that is also clearly separate ideologically from the *remanescente* literature, stands out as well for its general rigor and sophistication.

27. Cantarino O’Dwyer, Terra de Quilombos [1998?], ABA Session, Abstracts on Internet.

28. Brazilian anthropologists have also continued to fight against the general invisibility of blacks in many parts of the country. A collective work edited by Ilka Boaventura Leite (1996) takes invisibility as its theme, making an effective case for the historical (and contemporary) importance of blacks even in the most “European” of Brazil’s regions, the south.

29. Alcida Ramos (1994) provides an excellent summary of the recent history of the complex relationship between Brazilian anthropologists, professional indigenists, and Indians. For a fuller analysis, see Ramos 1998.

30. The publication of *Quilombo*, by journalist Hermes Leal (1995), demonstrates that there is a market in Brazil for sensational works about “primitive” quilombos. Leal and a T.V. film crew visited the “Quilombo do Kalunga,” which he claims consists of some forty-one villages with 8000 people 350 kilometers north of Brasília. Though much of the book describes his own (and the film crew’s) hardships during the brief adventure, he finds time to paint a picture of Kalunga poverty and ignorance, and their total lack of knowledge of who they are, where they came from, and why and how they’re “different” from other Brazilians. Like the rural Brazilians of times past, he claims, Kalungas live almost like animals and constitute “the most primitive quilombo” of Brazil (p. 13)—though no Kalunga knows what a “quilombo” is. The book ends with brief discussion of the plans for a hydroelectric dam that will flood much of their territory, and other recent threats to their “time-immemorial” way of life. (For a contrastive anthropological view of the Kalunga, see Baiocchi 1996:429-30.)

31. Ari Cipola, “Destino de local de quilombo é discutido” in *Folha de São Paulo* novembro 20, 1997. [Internet text.] On reading these lines, anthropologist John Collins called my attention to “the recent push in Salvador to categorize anyone of African descent as Black rather than the *moreno* norm arising from ideas about ‘racial democracy’—t-shirts proclaiming ‘100% Negro’ and the reworking of census categories are examples that come immediately to mind. This growing racial essentialism, alongside *remanescente* spatial essentialism, helps explain a recent comment by an MNU activist in Salvador that “Every black family is a quilombo. Every black Brazilian lives in a quilombo” (Personal communication, May 1998).

32. Carvalho (1997:158-59) wishes to insist on the heroism of *quilombolas* in the Brazilian context—taking Reis & dos Santos Gomes (1996) to task for allegedly not stressing it sufficiently—and calls for a new national history which recognizes “in our gallery of heroes, alongside Zumbi of Palmares, names like Cosme, leader of the

grouping of quilombos in Itapecuru; Queen Teresa, leader of the Quilombo of Quariterê (MT); Ambrósio, chief of Quilombo Grande de Minas Gerais; Atanásio, leader of the Quilombo Cidade Maravilha in Trombetas; Malunginho, legendary rebel of Quilombo Catucá (PE); and so many others who fought for the flag of freedom, carried forward, with no less commitment and dignity, by their thousand of descendants today."

33. Though it seems almost too evident to point out, perhaps it is worth underlining that in the self-proclaimed "racial democracy" of Brazil (which, it is often said, has the second largest black population in the world, after Nigeria), the tiny number of people covered by even the most expansive new "quilombo" definition still leaves tens of millions of poor, uneducated, and largely dispossessed black people without special legal recourse.

34. In June 1998, as this article goes to press, Suriname seems to have pulled off a remarkable public relations coup, culminating in a lead editorial in *The New York Times* headlined "Suriname's Example" (June 21, 1998, p. 14 wk). At a press conference in New York featuring film star Harrison Ford, the rainforest protection group Conservation International, which is in partnership in Suriname with Bristol-Myers Squibb, announced the creation of a four-million acre nature (and bio-prospecting) park in central Suriname, to be free from logging and mining, and maintained with the assistance of funds from Conservation International (Suriname Protects Major, Pristine Tropical Wilderness [Press Release of June 17, 1998; taken off Internet]). The designated area does not include either Indian or Maroon lands, and the only mention of "inhabitants" comes in C.I.'s touting of Suriname's prospects for ecotourism, with its "welcoming traditional cultures, including the forest-dwelling Maroon people." *The New York Times* seems unaware, as C.I. surely cannot be, that this worthy project provides a timely smokescreen for Suriname's ongoing forestry depredations just to the west of the park. As in the 1960s, when Suriname flooded Saramaka territory for a hydroelectric project yet received a great deal of feel-good publicity as part of the International Society for the Protection of Animals' save-the-wildlife project (see, for example, Walsh & Gannon 1967), the very public announcement of the nature reserve might be seen as a magnificent diversion from the vast devastation and abuse that Suriname is perpetrating in precisely those areas where Maroons do live.

35. The Wayampi added, "He is really white ... we Indians are not like that ... Chinese are Chinese, Japanese are Japanese, Indians are Indians, they aren't like white people." Joachim could not conceive of an Indian who looked and acted so much like other Americans. Indeed, in this memorable encounter the Tribal Chairman sold Joachim a cassette made by his band featuring a song called "Space-Age Indian." The scene is recorded in the film *Joachim Goes to America*, by Frederic Labourasse (1995; Coproduction France 3/Les Films d'Ici).

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TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF SURINAME NATIONALISM

INTRODUCTION

In 1983 the canonical literature on nationalism was extended with two challenging studies: *Nations and nationalism* by Ernest Gellner and *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson. Both studies attracted a large readership of social scientists, political scientists, historians, and students of related disciplines.¹

Gellner (1993:43), focusing on the Western world, identifies the beginnings of nationalism with Europe's transition from an agrarian to an industrial society. The transition, he claims, created a need for new social organizations, a need that was filled by the formation of culturally homogeneous units effectively substituting the organizational structures formerly provided by the church and the monarchy. In Gellner's opinion, nationalism is "the striving to make culture and polity congruent, to endow a culture with its own political roof."

By way of contrast, Anderson (1993:6), concentrating on non-Western societies, emphasizes the importance of the main goal of nationalism: the nation. He defines the nation as "an imagined political community" perceived by its members as both inherently limited and sovereign. In Anderson's view, nationalism, calling upon collective ideas, prospects, and aspirations, manipulates memory and forgetting in order to construct a past that can be linked to the contemporary imagination. For a nation, he argues, this mental process is a fundamental prerequisite in order to require a history of its own.

Both Gellner's and Anderson's books bear the mark of eloquence, lucidity, and erudition. Since their respective arguments are not so much the outcome of well-planned research, but rather the fruit of an elegantly ordered and persuasively formulated range of thoughts, their essays provide us with outstanding introductory literature. On closer inspection, however, their works appear to be of limited use for students of Caribbean nationalism. Suriname nationalism, for instance, operative for half a century but still not the subject of extensive research,² can hardly be associated meaningfully with the definitions and descriptions rendered by Gellner and Anderson. This is particularly due to the fact that both scholars favor a specific scientific approach. Gellner adheres to a functional paradigm, Anderson to a historical-psychological one.³ Consequently, they discuss certain aspects of nationalism, but deliberately leave out or fail to notice others. One of the most striking features of their work is the limited value they attribute to nationalist ideology (Gellner 1993:55-56, 123-30; Anderson 1993:5).

In this respect their studies diverge substantially from Anthony Smith's *National Identity* (1991). In this book, less ostentatiously welcomed by fellow-colleagues, but in fact the author's chef d'oeuvre, Smith devotes the main part of his analysis to nationalist movements and nationalist ideologies. His principal contribution to the existing literature is his effort to incorporate the many aspects of nationalism into one typological framework. This typology of nationalisms is attractive, since it tries to capture nationalism in all its diversity and multi-dimensionality and attempts to systematize the phenomenon irrespective of age, size, impact, and locality. Notwithstanding the comprehensiveness of this approach, Smith (1991:79) modestly presents his model as an additional research tool.

The object of this article is to examine the features of Suriname nationalism and study the mechanisms fostering and hampering its course. With the help of Smith's model I will determine the place Suriname nationalism occupies in the author's typological ranking order of nationalisms. Thus I expect to be able to produce a more distinct picture, not only of the essentials of Suriname nationalism, but also of the applicability of Smith's model. In order to place Suriname nationalism in a wider context, I will frequently refer to parallel experiences in other parts of the Caribbean. Since the postwar political history and sociocultural setting of Guyana and Trinidad are similar to Suriname, attention will be directed to those countries in particular.

SURINAME NATIONALISM

In his impressive work on ideological trends in Caribbean history, Gordon Lewis (1983:15-16) identifies three primary moments: Discovery, Emancipation, and Political Independence. His main concern is the link between these landmarks and, what he calls, the proslavery creed, the antislavery creed, and the creed of nationalism respectively. Although Lewis's investigations do not lead him to the twentieth century (he earlier discussed this age in Lewis 1968) and regrettably exclude the Dutch Caribbean, his findings underscore the importance of nationalism as a Caribbean phenomenon and justify the continuing interest scholars take in studying this primary moment.

The creed of nationalism, according to Lewis manifest in the Caribbean since the late eighteenth century,⁴ arose in Suriname in the wake of the constitutional process that started in 1942. In that year Queen Wilhelmina delivered a speech which heralded a new Kingdom to come. A series of conferences was organized which in 1954 produced the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, granting Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles autonomy in domestic affairs and providing sophisticated procedures to serve the Kingdom's foreign affairs and defense "jointly." This cautious way of modernizing Dutch-Suriname relations also involved the introduction of universal suffrage in 1948 and parliamentary elections one year later. Suriname nationalists tried to influence this decolonization process, politically and culturally. In the following section I will deal with Suriname political and cultural nationalism successively.

Before 1975, when their country obtained sovereignty, Suriname political nationalists focused on the withdrawal from the Kingdom of the Netherlands and on the establishment of an independent Suriname state. The *Partij van de Nationalistische Republiek* (PNR, Party of the Nationalist Republic), founded in 1961 and led by Eddy Bruma, was the most ardent exponent of this anticolonial nationalism.⁵ Although the PNR held the view that nationalism had strong emotional roots, the party believed that education could help to transform the "instinctive nationalism" into a "philosophical nationalism" (Bruma 1963:6-11). Taking reason as its leading principle, this "conscious nationalism" was expected to bring about sovereignty, according to constitutional and international laws (Bruma 1963:18, 23).

The PNR had close ties with *Wie Eegie Sanie* (WES, Our Own Things), a small association of Surinamers established in 1950 in the Netherlands and operating in Suriname from the mid-1950s. WES (whose cultural activities will be discussed below) favored a dominion status for Suriname. By the

end of the 1950s, the leadership of the Nationale Partij Suriname (NPS, National Suriname Party) was attracted to this ideal as well. Between 1958 and 1967 the NPS, a mainly Creole (Afro-Surinamese) party, presided by Johan Adolf Pengel, shared power with the Verenigde Hindostaanse Partij (VHP, United Hindostani Party) headed by Jagernath Lachmon.⁶ Due to pressure exercised by WES and related groups like the Nationalistische Beweging Suriname (NBS, Nationalist Suriname Movement) Pengel and Lachmon gave the concept of fraternization, which was basic to their cooperation, a nationalist dimension. As a result, in 1959 the Suriname parliament approved of a national flag, a national anthem, and a national coat of arms and in 1960 introduced the Day of Freedoms as a national holiday. In 1961, however, having negotiated with the Netherlands the possible extension of Suriname's autonomy, the VHP decided to leave the road to independence. A majority of the party feared Creole domination over the Hindostani population group if a dominion status would be achieved. The NPS, committed to the politics of fraternization and opposed to any, in their eyes, irresponsible acceleration of the decolonization process, consented to a temporary freezing of the sovereignty issue. Hereupon members of WES and the NBS founded the PNR.

Under subsequent Pengel-administrations the PNR, competing with the NPS for Creole support, was severely criticized and branded as a communist-inspired party aiming to ideologically poison Suriname youth. This opportunistic strategy effectively kept the PNR in a marginal position. Consequently, in the 1960s Dutch-Suriname relations did not undergo any significant change. In 1970, Henck Arron succeeded Pengel as leader of the NPS. Arron, determined to break with the party's reservations towards independence, viewed the PNR as a companion rather than a rival. In the 1973 elections the NPS and the PNR collaborated and together with another Creole ally, the Progressieve Surinaamse Volkspartij (PSV, Progressive Suriname People's Party) and a small Javanese party, managed to beat the rival Hindostani bloc. Notwithstanding the severe opposition of the VHP, the Arron-administration successfully realized independence for Suriname in 1975 (Dew 1978; Meel 1990 and 1994).

Following independence Suriname nationalism aspired to bring about a process of integration. A number of initiatives were taken to transcend ethnic, social, and geographical barriers and to accomplish a state all civilians could equally identify with. Surprising as it may seem, this was not on the initiative of the PNR (who lost all its parliamentary seats in the 1977 elections and foundered due to internal dispute) nor of the NPS (who continued to give priority to the interests of its Creole clientele, publicly advertising self-reliance as the key to national development).

Integration nationalism in the second half of the 1970s was advocated particularly by the Progressieve Arbeiders en Landbouwers Unie (PALU, Progressive Union of Workers and Peasants), the Volkspartij (VP, People's Party), and the Demokratisch Volksfront (DVF, Democratic People's Front).

These small opposition parties, which had in vain opted for parliamentary seats in 1973 (DVF) and in 1977, more so than the established political parties showed themselves to be aware of the existing social injustices and structural weaknesses of the Suriname polity. To eliminate these abuses and to reconstruct the polity, they proposed "national" solutions which were primarily socioeconomic in orientation. All three parties actively resisted foreign dominance over Suriname's economy and urged a broadening of the country's economic foundations. In their opinion the modernization of agriculture and nationalization of industry deserved high priority. PALU, VP, and DVF wished to achieve in a leftist spirit and with grass roots support the policy the Arron-administration had named "the mobilization of the self."

In order to strengthen the people's participation in the development of the republic, the VP in particular defended the institution of local government boards. The party stated that the centralist government in Paramaribo hindered the formation of an all-embracing democratic polity and that additional forms of organization were needed in order to involve the population in the advancement process. From an egalitarian perspective PALU, VP, and DVF strongly opposed the ethnic emphasis of the leading political parties and displayed an uncompromising multi-ethnic attitude. It was their belief that in party politics class had to be the decisive organizing principle (Chin & Buddingh' 1987:32-36).

It seemed that the military takeover of February 25, 1980 might make way for the implementation of the ideas advanced by these tiny radical parties. The declaration of government on May 1 of that year celebrated February 25 as liberation day and the beginning of a new era. According to the declaration, the military had brought down a regime that had enhanced corruption, injustice, social inequity, bureaucracy, and nepotism. The road being cleared for drastic reconstruction, the government ambitiously announced renewals of the political-administrative, the social, the educational, and the socioeconomic order (Chin & Buddingh' 1987:40-41).

A radicalization of this new course began one year later with the publication of the "Manifesto of the Revolution." In this document the military intervention was renamed a revolution, attention was drawn to the ongoing struggle of the Suriname people against colonialism and neo-

colonialism, and the need was expressed for a "true democracy." With this goal in mind, the manifesto championed the creation of a political mass organization that could extend and protect the achievements and ideals of the revolution. The Revolutionair Front (Revolutionary Front), the 25 Februari Beweging (February 25 Movement), and (since 1987) the Nationale Democratische Partij (NDP, National Democratic Party) have successively welcomed groups and individuals who perceive social equity and national development as political top priorities (Chin & Buddingh' 1987:47-50, 81-82).⁷

The identification of nationalism with the effectuation of political independence characterized nationalism in Suriname, but also in the British West Indies. A study by Charles Moskos revealed that in the 1960s, nationalist leaders in the Anglophone Caribbean were predominantly influenced by Enlightenment ideals.⁸ Political democracy, egalitarianism, and social inclusiveness made up the nucleus of their nationalist thinking. Political democracy in their opinion meant a parliamentary system based on adult suffrage and the existence of civil rights; they regarded egalitarianism as equal rights for all citizens, and considered social inclusiveness to be the reduction of social barriers between groups within their own society. To indicate the relationship between West Indian nationalism and French Revolution ideals, Moskos (1967a:49-56) correlated political democracy with freedom, egalitarianism with equality, and social inclusiveness with fraternity.

Following independence, administrations in the British Caribbean, as in Suriname, tried to break colonial structures, highlighting the paragraphs on equality and social justice in their political programs. In the 1970s, Jamaica, and in the early 1980s Grenada, adopting a Cuba-inspired model of development, attracted considerable attention. Under the leadership of Forbes Burnham Guyana followed an alternative socialist path in the 1970s and early 1980s. According to Wendell Bell (1980:6, 30), social justice is the key issue nationalist regimes ought to promote if they wish to minimize political alienation among their citizens and maximize their legitimacy. Along with ineffectiveness and inefficiency, he labels inequity as the main cause of the loss of legitimacy of political regimes. Without doubt this conclusion applies to the Suriname nationalist experiment as well.

Suriname cultural nationalism is generally believed to have started in 1950 with the establishment of WES and to have had a profound influence at least until 1961, when the PNR came into existence. WES, a small association of students and workers under the leadership of Eddy Bruma, dedicated itself to the cultural emancipation of the Suriname population. According to Bruma, constitutional improvements were

important, but the emancipation of the Surinamers would not materialize if they continued to disregard the significance and value of their own culture. In his view it was not the outright imitation of the allegedly superior European cultures, but the wholehearted acceptance and development of their "true identity" that would liberate the Suriname people. Although WES propagated the emancipation of the entire Suriname population, the association was generally perceived as a vehicle for Creole emancipation. Its membership did not include prominent representatives of the Hindostani or Javanese population groups.

Bruma and WES concentrated on the official recognition of Sranantongo, Suriname's *lingua franca*, but for many non-Creoles the Afro-Surinamese language *par excellence*. Although spoken by a majority of the population, it held a very low status. Monolingual speakers of Sranantongo were widely considered uncivilized and poorly educated. Only a good command of Dutch, the official language, gave access to well-paid jobs and social success. Opposing Dutch as a colonial language, WES encouraged the use of Sranantongo in public speaking and also in literary works and dramatic art. WES viewed Sranantongo as "common property," as the authentic medium the Surinamese should communicate in and from which they ought to derive dignity and self-respect. Common residence on Suriname soil and the awareness of a shared colonial legacy were already considered basic elements in the construction of a national identity. Additionally, WES advocated Sranantongo not only as the preferred language in cultural settings, but also as the official language, the proper cement for the developing Suriname nation (Meel 1997:17-37, 472-80).⁹

What stands out as a marked success of Suriname cultural nationalism is the proclamation in 1960 of rules for regulation of Sranantongo. Herewith the Suriname government recognized Sranantongo as a language culturally equal to Dutch. Gradually Sranantongo lost its negative image: the production of Sranantongo prose and poetry increased, and in public life Sranantongo became an accepted medium of communication. However, Sranantongo did not replace Dutch as the official language of Suriname. The Suriname government shrank away from awarding Sranantongo a favored status and in 1986, conceding to pressure on the part of Hindostani and Javanese organizations, acknowledged Sarnami-Hindostani and Surinamese-Javanese as "cultural languages" as well. Thus the unifying function that nationalists had in mind for Sranantongo did not work out. Dutch remained the administrative and educational language and has maintained this position until the present day (Meel 1997:42-46, 66-67).

According to Moskos, in the Anglophone Caribbean Romantic ideals

filtered through in the favorable attitude that nationalists assumed towards West Indian history, West Indian language and culture, and West Indian man. Moskos (1967a:56-77; 1967b:58-65) argues that in all these domains nationalists aimed at self-esteem, authenticity, and dignity. In this respect, Suriname and West Indian cultural nationalism closely resemble each other. Moskos, however, also states that Romantic ideals contributed only partly to nationalist ideology before independence. Cultural nationalism, a paramount outcome of Romanticism, in his view is a consequence of political nationalism rather than an autonomous prime mover. This conclusion does not hold for Suriname nationalism. As indicated above, in Suriname, political and cultural nationalism have to be regarded as separate movements, although since the late 1950s they have become increasingly interwoven and have mutually strengthened each other.

On closer inspection, Moskos's opinion also seems less valid for Trinidad, where political nationalism was accompanied by a renaissance in music, art, and literature. Due to the long-lasting regime of the People's National Movement (PNM) (1956-86, 1991-95), this cultural reorientation was mainly Creole in character, with the calypso, the steelband, and Carnival as its most salient features. Since nationalism mainly converged with the construction of African-derived symbols, it failed to obtain the support of all population groups. Particularly Trinidadians of Indian descent felt alienated from the cultural standards the government applied. Many of them considered Creole culture inferior to Indian culture and made a distinction between creolization and Westernization, rejecting the first and approving of the latter. On the other hand, many Creoles considered the Indian culture a closed and inaccessible subculture not worthy of promotion and unfit for incorporation in the national culture. Despite official proclamations about the equality of races and the melting pot character of society, the contents of Trinidadian nationalism maintained the prerogative of the ethnic group in power. Obviously this prevented the creation of an ethnically integrated national community, an ideal PNM-leader Eric Williams propagated both as a politician and a scholar (Ryan 1972:337-501; Brereton 1985:223-49; Yelvington 1993:11-14).

In Guyana political nationalism did prevail over cultural nationalism between 1950 and 1953. During these years, the People's Progressive Party (PPP) with the help of socialist principles united Afro-Guyanese and East Indians in order to put an end to British colonial rule. In 1955, however, ideological and political conflicts between Cheddi Jagan and Forbes Burnham split the PPP along ethnic lines. Jagan remained leader of the PPP, almost exclusively devoting his attention to the interests of the East Indians. Burnham in 1958 created the Peoples National Congress

(PNC), its main concern being the welfare and progress of the Afro-Guyanese. Officially socialism served as the ideological compass for both the PPP and the PNC. The true ambitions of their leaders, however, were determined by ethno-nationalism and elite control of the state (Hintzen 1989; Premdas 1995). The PPP/PNC sustained antagonism between Afro-Guyanese and East Indians went together with mutual hostility, violence, and terror. From the early 1970s, the PNC-regime (1964-92) extended and intensified its policy of repression, turning the country into a heavily militarized state. Premdas (1995:191) bitterly presents the Guyanese case as an antimodel. Although he credits the Burnham-Jagan leadership for pressuring the colonial power out of Guyana, he blames them for audaciously putting their private interests before those of their fellow-citizens and launching the Guyanese state into an "irretrievable tailspin of ethnically-ignited passions that led to collective catastrophe."

Suriname, before 1975 pursuing a political course comparable to that of Trinidad, but following independence sharing many of the nightmares clouding state and society in Guyana, seems increasingly to have become synonymous with the discrepancy "between the ideals of democracy and equality and the actualities of too frequent repression and inequality, between progress and despair, between knowledge and ignorance" (Bell 1967:224). Despite the rhetoric of politicians and military leaders, since 1975 ethnic cleavages have prevailed in Suriname politics, just as they did before independence. Contrary to their initial ideals, since 1980 the military regime strengthened rather than weakened the existing ethnic divisions. The interethnic (New) Front for Democracy and Development, in power from 1987 to 1996, succeeded in restoring parliamentary democracy, but with the deepening of the economic crisis, ethnic affiliation and competition within the combination grew and showed the Front for what it really was: an opportunistic coalition determined to wipe out military rule and re-establish traditional power structures. The NPS and the VHP, that changed its name in 1973 into *Vooruitstrevende Hervormings Partij* (Progressive Reformation Party), were the most prominent advocates of this restoration strategy (Dew 1994).

As for migration, developments also proved disastrous. From the 1950s up to the 1970s, Suriname migrants in the Netherlands had been crucial in fomenting nationalism. Many of them returned to Suriname following the example set by Bruma in 1954. The presence of a large and growing expatriate community in the Netherlands from the mid-1970s onwards, however, strengthened the importance of the former mother country as a focus of orientation and considerably weakened the belief in the viability of Suriname as an independent state. Moreover, the diaspora's duplication

of Suriname's ethnic pluralism had a negative effect on the process of nation building since it displayed the enduring power of ethnicity in a relatively favorable economic climate and the inability of Suriname leaders in the Netherlands to curb its political sway (Oostindie 1996:216-21).¹⁰

In her penetrating study on Guyana, Williams (1991:127-98) explains the failure of integration nationalism from a different point of view. She argues that precepts of hierarchy and precepts of egalitarianism determine the ideological framework people rely on when dealing with class, race, ethnicity, and national identity. In the case of Guyana, precepts of hierarchy were introduced by the Anglo-European colonizer, precepts of egalitarianism came to the fore in the struggle for independence, and in the decades following the birth of the independent state of Guyana.

Williams elucidates the custom of the Anglo-European colonizer to judge each population group by its assumed contribution to the development of plantation agriculture. On that basis he allocated rights, privileges, rewards, and assistance unequally among them. Administrative and cultural policies produced persistent stereotypes that facilitated the establishment of a hegemonic order in which Anglo-Europeans claimed economic, administrative, and cultural superiority and set standards for civilized conduct.

In the course of the centuries the non-European population groups copied the European strategy with respect to stereotyping and similarly differentiated the contributions each of them claimed to have made to the development of Guyana. When, following World War II, the Anglo-Europeans gradually withdrew from the scene, disagreements over a new rank order arose, provoking critical tensions between Afro-Guyanese and East Indians. Williams (1991:226, 253) blames "the ghost of hegemonic dominance" for this discord and emphasizes the need to locate and exorcize this ghost to give way to "a territorial nationalism capable of consistently effacing the cultural nationalisms of ethnic competition."

In Suriname the drive towards ethnic and social hierarchizing has been equally continuous. With respect to interethnic relations, Creoles, Hindostani, Javanese, Maroons, Amerindians, and Chinese persist in using positive features in self-ascription and negative features in identifying rival groups. Notwithstanding the rhetoric of "nationalist" leaders, precepts of egalitarianism on the administrative level have not replaced precepts of hierarchy. The predominant influence of race, class, and ethnicity together with the legacy of authoritarian rule has saddled the Suriname state with ongoing legitimacy and credibility crises.¹¹ The paralyzing effect of the Creole-Hindostani political strife between 1975 and 1980, the subsequent military-led "revolutionary" experiments that grew out of control, and

after 1987 the animosity between the traditional political parties and the NDP, have all put the Suriname nation severely to the test and have convincingly demonstrated the incapacity of the state to acquire lasting popular support. As Lewis (1968:394) once put it: "There is little understanding of the idea of creative partnership between citizen and state."

IMPLEMENTATION OF SMITH'S MODEL

What is the relevance of Smith's model for Suriname? Smith makes a distinction between two types of nationalism, territorial and ethnic. He subdivides each of them according to their performance before and after independence, thus arriving at a fourfold typology. He points out that territorial nationalisms consist of movements in which the concept of the nation is primarily civic and territorial. As pre-independence movements, territorial nationalisms aspire to expel foreign rulers and substitute a new nation-state for the old colonial territory. Smith calls these movements *anti-colonial* nationalisms. As post-independence movements, territorial nationalisms seek to bring together and integrate often disparate ethnic populations into a new political community. Out of the old colonial state they try to create a new "territorial nation." Smith names these movements *integration* nationalisms.

Smith describes ethnic nationalisms as movements that consider the concept of the nation to be basically ethnic and genealogical. As pre-independence movements, ethnic nationalisms endeavor to secede from a larger political unit and set up a new political "ethno-nation" in its place. Smith categorizes these movements *secession* or *diaspora* nationalisms. As post-independence movements, ethnic nationalisms desire to expand by including ethnic "kinsmen" living outside the existing boundaries of the "ethno-nation" or by forming a much larger "ethno-national" state through unification of culturally and ethnically identical "ethno-national" states. Smith (1991:82-83) labels these movements *irredentist* and *pan* nationalisms.¹²

For a better understanding of Smith's model it is important to note that ethnic nationalisms take *cultural unity* as their starting-point. Their main concern is the survival of their specific culture, which they try to protect politically and physically. In their view independence primarily serves a *cultural* goal. Territorial nationalisms cannot rely on a common or significant culture. For that reason they build on the established *political* unity. They aim at overthrowing the foreign administration and

establishing a new nation-state. It is their conviction that independence primarily serves a *political* goal (Smith 1971:216-18; 1976:4-5).

Suriname nationalism is unmistakably an example of a territorial nationalism. Before and after independence, Suriname nationalists, and indeed non-nationalist politicians as well, have perceived the concept of the nation as civic and territorial. As for the latter element, the borders of Suriname have never been the subject of any domestic controversy whatsoever. The territory, in the 1955 constitution still described as Dutch Guyana (Mitrasing 1966:190), is exactly the same territory as in the 1975 "independence" constitution, which takes Suriname for granted and does not specify it geographically. The 1987 constitution, which is still in operation, defines Suriname as "the territory on the South American continent which is historically agreed upon as such" (Fernandes Mendes 1989:310). This description tacitly encompasses the south-western part of the country (which is claimed by Georgetown) and the south-eastern part (claimed by Cayenne).¹³ The territorial concept of the nation is best expressed in Suriname's national anthem. The first two lines of this secular hymn encourage fellow-countrymen to rise, because *Sranangron* (the Suriname soil) is calling them.¹⁴

Considering the civic element in the concept of the nation, Suriname politicians have invariably centered on the rights of man. The preamble of the 1975 constitution upholds "the legal equality of all civilians," speaks of the obligation to respect and safeguard the "fundamental rights and liberties" of man, recalls to memory "the ideals of freedom, tolerance, democracy and progress" which inspire the nation, and points out the determination to live together and to work "on the basis of freedom, equality, fraternity and human solidarity" (Fernandes Mendes 1989:298).

These Enlightenment ideals are also quoted in the 1987 constitution, but in this document they are embedded in a nationalist program. The preamble explicitly refers to the struggle of the Suriname people against colonialism, according to the text a struggle that ended at the moment Suriname obtained sovereignty. In the same breath the preamble mentions the ongoing fight against neo-colonialism and the struggle for new social relations since 1980. "National sovereignty, independence, and integrity" are promoted as core values and the Suriname population is roused to experience its citizenship actively and to participate in the construction of a "society based on social equity" (Fernandes Mendes 1989:309).

In Smith's model, territorial nationalisms as pre-independence movements aim for a takeover of the state. In Suriname this has also been the case. Before 1975, PNR nationalists, from the early 1970s with NPS support, pushed their way forward in order to seize the state from the

hands of the Dutch. According to Smith, territorial nationalisms as postindependence movements focus on the advancement of integration. In this respect the Suriname example fits into his model as well. Following 1975, the PALU, the VP, and the DVF, and from 1981 the Revolutionary Front, the February 25 Movement, and the NDP successively stood up for the harmonization and amalgamation of the different Suriname population groups into one "territorial nation."

Thus, with the help of the model elaborated by Smith, we can determine the civic and territorial nature of Suriname nationalism and distinguish an anticolonial and an integration phase. This knowledge certainly contributes to a more clear-cut picture of Suriname nationalism and offers ample possibilities for further research. Yet, Suriname realities do not fully match Smith's model. Particularly Suriname nationalism between 1950 and 1961, mixing an anticolonial with an integration stance, does not fit smoothly into Smith's framework. The reason for this is simple. Smith rather rigidly links the anticolonial phase to the pre-independence nationalist movement and the integration phase to the postindependence nationalist movement, leaving no room for nationalisms that view anticolonialism and integration as complementary elements being part of the same political strategy.

Below, I will examine the problems of integration nationalism in Suriname in more detail, concentrating on the cultural dimensions of integration, particularly on its ideological aspects and visual representations. Following up my introductory remarks, I will connect relevant facts and events with theoretical insights, especially those formulated by Haas, Hobsbawm, and Smith.

NATIONAL MYTHS, INVENTED TRADITIONS, AND CAPITAL MONUMENTS

Ernst Haas, although joining Gellner in envisaging nationalism as a rationalization process, argues that this process can only be successful if a national myth comes into existence. Haas (1986:728) defines a national myth as "a core of ideas and claims about selfhood commonly accepted by all the socially mobilized." In his opinion, it corresponds to an amalgam of "ideas, values and symbols" that most citizens accept despite ideological differences. Haas (1986:738) believes that national myths transcend ideological controversies and under the best of circumstances represent the overlap among competing ideologies.¹⁵

As far as mythology is concerned, Suriname has never been short of the constructs Anderson so empathically writes about. Notably following World War II, images of the past have been designed to serve contemporary political purposes. Claims regarding the supposedly vast extent of Dutch participation in the Atlantic slave-trade and the assumed large number of slaves transferred to Suriname, together with the conviction that slavery in Suriname was by far the harshest variant in the New World were not observations primarily made to display historical accuracy. Above all they expressed a growing sense of anticolonialism. Later attempts to equate the system of slavery with the system of indentured labor, in terms of oppression and exploitation, aimed to add an integration perspective to this anticolonial attitude (Oostindie 1997:306-7).¹⁶ Yet these constructs have chiefly feeded debates among small groups of intellectuals. They do not appeal to the majority of the population. It is therefore doubtful whether they should be labelled *national* myths.

There are only two myths that can claim to hold notions of genuine nationalism. The first is the myth of the unfulfilled promise, which perceives Suriname as the potentially rich and fertile country, the paradise everyone has had glimpses of, but which no one has encountered in full bloom. This inverted Eldorado-myth is epitomized in the popular saying: if you put a stick in the ground, leaves grow out of it. The listing in a 1996 World Bank report of Suriname in the 17th and the Netherlands in the 19th position in the rank order of potentially richest countries, has sustained confidence in the socioeconomic capabilities of the Suriname nation. The pictures printed on current Suriname banknotes, glorifying specific sections of the country's economy, reflect similar hopes and dreams in an almost socialist-realist fashion.¹⁷

The second myth is the myth of the *mamio*, the patchwork quilt, symbolizing the unique variety of population groups and cultures inhabiting Suriname. The image of Suriname as "the world in pocket-size," where unity in diversity renders peace and harmony, has been adapted both by the VHP and the NPS. The philosophy of unity in diversity, basically a religious principle in a secularized form propagated by Rabindranath Tagore, has determined the VHP's political stance since the 1950s (Adhin 1976 and 1997).¹⁸ But the NPS too, advocating a moderate nationalism from the days of Pengel, has lately adopted cultural pluralism as the sole attainable strategy, balancing the ideal of acculturation with the actuality of ethnocentrism (*Ter overdenking* 1987:36-37; Nationale Partij Suriname 1987:84-88; Nieuw Front 1996:20).¹⁹

However, both the paradise and the *mamio* myths have a predominantly stabilizing and preserving function. Whether they feature in political

speeches, educational programs, or market-place conversation, they clearly serve as a means to appease and inspire confidence. The myths do not challenge people to create, innovate, or develop, but confirm persistent ideas and a shallow sense of a shared identity. Basically they lack the dynamics to accelerate or strengthen the process of integration.²⁰

The concept of the national myth resembles the concept of invented tradition as coined by Eric Hobsbawm. According to Hobsbawm (1993:1), an invented tradition refers to "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past." Hobsbawm (1993:4, 10-11) emphasizes that invented traditions consist of processes of formalization and ritualization that are meant to involve people more deeply in the affairs of the community they belong to. The values, rights, and obligations they represent are answers to new situations having the form of references to old situations. Within the ever changing world invented traditions attempt to structure parts of social life as fixed.

Such invented traditions in Suriname are the national flag, the national anthem, and the national coat of arms that the Suriname parliament approved of in 1959. These symbols express the ideal of identity and sovereignty of the state. In turn they are used by the state to enforce loyalty and respect from its citizens.²¹ Usually the national airline, national holidays such as Independence Day, and the national passport are likewise considered important symbols. In Suriname, however, they are met with mixed feelings and a capricious appreciation. Many Surinamers prefer the services of the Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM) to those of the Suriname Airlines (SLM), notably following the crash of the SLM-plane "Anthony Nesty" in 1989 near Paramaribo. They take less pride in institutions like Independence Day when they weigh the existent political state of affairs against the elevated notions deemed appropriate for the occasion. Due to mass migration to the Netherlands from the mid-1970s onwards, the attraction of a Dutch passport for a substantial number of Surinamese supersedes the attraction held by its Suriname equivalent.

The *Dag der Vrijheden* (Day of Freedoms) appears to have been an unsuccessful invented tradition. Proclaimed in 1960 as a national holiday, celebrating emancipation from both slavery and indentured labor, in 1993 the Suriname government renamed July 1 *Keti Koti* (Break the chains) again, remembering the abolition of slavery. Paramaribo thus deliberately deprived the day of its national character and gave it back its original Creole gist (Herrenberg 1992).²² *Revodei* (Revolution Day) stands out as the most recent and vehemently disputed invented tradition. The ceremo-

nies held on February 25 are meant to arouse sentiments of national unity and liberation. However, the ideas and personages behind the celebration are not endorsed unanimously. For many people February 25 is indissolubly linked to the military outrage of the 1980s and perceived not as an expression of integration nationalism, but as the ultimate symbol of the evil that descended upon Suriname in 1980.

In this context the apparent lack of cultural heroes in Suriname is worth mentioning. Historical or contemporary figures people can identify with and from whom they can derive power and inspiration, are notably scarce. Boni, De Kom, and Koenders²³ are often regarded as leaders who possessed this quality, but as icons of the anticolonial struggle their ideas and actions only appeal to a specific (mostly Creole) elite. Their images do not figure large in the mind of the average Surinamer. The same holds true for NDP-leader Bouterse whose lackeys attempt to award him a nimbus of impartiality and invincibility, but whose public and personal record stands at right angles to the political aspirations he has been articulating since he resigned as Commander of the National Army in 1992.²⁴

The search for a national identity in Suriname is recognizably visualized by the many statues and monuments adorning the capital of Paramaribo. As to be expected, the oldest monuments are relics of the colonial past. The statues of Governor Van Asch van Wijk (1904) and Queen Wilhelmina (1923) enlivened Orange Square (now Independence Square) for many years, but were given a less assuming place on the grounds of Fort Zeelandia in 1974 and 1975 respectively. Two other conspicuous monuments stemming from the pre-autonomy period are connected with World War II. They are the Memorial for the Fallen (1950/1955), commemorating those Surinamers who fell in World War II and in the Korean War, and the Gratitude Monument (1955), a gift from the Netherlands in gratitude to the support of Suriname during and after World War II.

The unveiling of the statues of Simón Bolívar (1955) and Mahatma Gandhi (1959) demonstrated that Suriname in 1954 had opened a new chapter in its political history.²⁵ Apparently there was a need for "foreign" examples in the initial phase of autonomy, for only since the early 1960s have statues been raised which clearly reflect Surinamese realities. The statue of Kwakoe (1963), a male figure of Afro-Surinamese descent freeing himself from heavy chains, symbolizes the liberation from slavery and is embraced particularly by those who regarded the Day of Freedoms as a corruption of Ketu Koti. Statues of De Miranda (1961), Pengel (1974), Weidmann (1975), and Essed (1996) illustrate the predominant share of Creole politicians and Creole political parties in the country's polity. Monuments which the artists intended to evoke more

national sentiments are the statue of Mama Sranan (1965), representing a mother holding five children on her arm – symbolizing Suriname's five major population groups – and the Staten Monument (1966), commemorating the hundredth anniversary of the Suriname parliament. Compared to the well-liked statues of Gandhi and Kwakoe, which regularly serve as meeting places on occasions of celebration or demonstration, these latter two monuments, however, do not enjoy great popularity.

The four major monuments erected in the decades following independence differ in many ways, artistically and ideologically. However, they all, in different degrees of directness, make a statement on modern Suriname history, including the problems of integration. The statue of Baba and Mai (1994), representing an old immigrant couple of Hindostani descent, is meant to pay tribute to the first indentured laborers coming from India to Suriname in 1873. Since the images both figures recall center exclusively around Hindostani immigration, the underlying message can only be interpreted ethnically. In fact the statue celebrates the political and socioeconomic progress of the largest population group today. As such it is intrinsically linked to the statue of Gandhi and forms a counterpart for the symbols of "Creole success" constructed in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Revolution Monument (1981) and the Monument in Commemoration of all Victims of Human Rights Violations in Suriname since February 1980 (1993) underscore the brutality that has accompanied the power struggle between factions of Surinamers following the coup d'état of 1980. Ideologically the monuments are opposing poles, representing systems of norms and ways of thinking that cannot easily be reconciled. The monuments aim at symbolizing progress and human dignity respectively, but in combination they fundamentally embody the agony and laceration Suriname has fallen prey to and for which it has still not found a tenable solution.

The Monument in Memory of the Victims of the SLM Plane Crash on June 7, 1989 (1989) falls into a separate category as far as location (the Rusthof cemetery), occasion (an air-traffic accident), and the high number of casualties (180) are concerned. But despite the absence of ideological connotations, the memorial for many Surinamers exemplifies sheer decay. After all, the causes of the catastrophe were poor equipment and infrastructural defects at Zanderij Airport, and the inability of the SLM to employ competent pilots. Since many casualties were Dutch citizens of Suriname origin on the way to visit their native country, on a more abstract level the monument symbolizes the linkages between Surinamers at home and in the former mother country. From a territorial perspective it exposes the dichotomy of the Suriname people.²⁶

The above catalogue, listing a number of visual comments on Suriname national identity, mainly consists of artistic representations of ethnicity and frustrated integration. Most monuments thus contribute to the persistence of ideas that thwart nation building and hinder the development of a common Suriname identity.²⁷

CONCLUSION

In most Anglophone Caribbean countries as well as in Suriname, nationalism manifests itself as a paradoxical phenomenon: it combats colonialism, relying, in any case historically, on "colonial" philosophical theories. The Enlightenment and Romanticism must be regarded as its main sources of inspiration. The ideals derived from both currents of thought have been adapted to the physical and mental environment of the respective countries, but their origins are still traceable.

With respect to Suriname nationalism, the typology developed by Smith has proven to be a useful research tool. It is clear that territorial nationalism, maintaining a primarily civic and territorial concept of the nation, has played a prominent part in modern Suriname history. The proclamation of independence in 1975 marked the triumph of anticolonial nationalism. Integration nationalism has subsequently been given considerable attention, but basically as a result of the uncontrollable forces of ethnicity has produced only marginal results. Many statues and monuments in Paramaribo function as the silent but significant expressions of this.

At variance with Smith's model, the stages of anticolonial and integration nationalism in the case of Suriname do not converge seamlessly with the country's pre- and postindependence nationalist movements. In the decades following 1975, integration nationalism has been a central, though unsuccessful political force, but in the 1950-61 period this nationalism was also alive, due to Bruma's zealous emancipatory ambitions. One of the outcomes of this early nationalism, which did not transcend the limitations of the domain of Creole culture, was the official recognition of Sranantongo as a cultural language.

Today there is a growing tendency to reduce the importance of nationalism in the light of the current globalization process. The assumption is that in a world increasingly consisting of power blocs and common markets under the flag of free market enterprise, nationalist movements and nationalist ideology are quickly becoming obsolete. For a number of Wes-

tern European countries this argument may be valid, but for many plural societies that only recently became independent, which have limited governmental experience, and are economically vulnerable, circumstances and therefore priorities are quite different.

If the governments of these countries sincerely wish to break with insularism and fully benefit from the globalization process, they will need nationwide support. This requires a collective identity, a distinct set of common interests, values, beliefs, and attitudes, not only to get to know themselves and their capabilities, but also to motivate and inspire their subjects and to impress on them the necessity of cooperation. No alternative ideology being available, nationalism will as yet remain a vehicle for the promotion of cohesion, self-confidence, and growth. It will depend on the power and integrity of its representatives whether Suriname nationalism will be protected from abuse and manipulation, and will develop into a truly constructive force in politics.

NOTES

1. The core of this article was tried out on 25 July 1996 in a lecture delivered in Theater Unique, Paramaribo, Suriname. I would like to thank J.H. Adhin, J. Breeveld, E.K. Marshall, M. Schalkwijk, and J. Sedney for their stimulating critique in the subsequent panel discussion. I am grateful to E.B. Carlin for carefully reading the first written version of this lecture and improving my English. Finally, I am indebted to the editors of *NWIG*, whose constructive comments encouraged me to produce the present version of the text.

2. Publications on Suriname nationalism, partly tentative in nature, are Meel 1990, 1994, 1997 and Oostindie 1990, 1996, and 1997. Jansen van Galen (1995), a well-written account condensing twenty-five years of journalistic involvement in Suriname, contains a number of useful insights on the subject. E.K. Marshall is currently writing a Ph.D. thesis on Suriname nationalism.

3. Breuilly (1982:18-35) presents an excellent overview of the approaches that students of nationalism have applied in twentieth-century historiography, including the paradigms used by Gellner and Anderson. Breuilly's main objection to the latter is that they wield a tradition/modernity dichotomy which does not contribute to a better understanding of nationalism, since both tradition and modernity are difficult to define and can be applied to almost any society that has reached a certain level of development. Quite rightly Breuilly opposes the assumption that nationalism *as a rule* is born out of the conflict between tradition and modernity. Smith (1971: chapters III, V, and VI, but particularly 134-36) offers similar criticism. If one uses the tradition/modernity design with respect to Suriname, the constitutional process that started in 1942 can be regarded as the beginning of the modernity era.

4. Lewis (1983:239) is able to make this claim using a nonspecific definition of cultural nationalism – which he believes to precede political nationalism – and focusing on Haiti and the Spanish Caribbean. The few examples of nineteenth-century British West Indian thought in his study, Lewis (1983:307-16) defines as expressions of protonationalism.

5. Smith (1971:65-85) and Breuilly (1982:125-39) discuss theories of anti-colonialism.

6. With the term Hindostani I refer to Suriname inhabitants of (East) Indian descent. The word is not synonymous with Hindus. Most Hindostani are indeed Hindu, but a sizable part of them is Muslim, Christian, agnostic etc.

7. See also *Wat te doen* (1996), the lengthy action program published by the NDP on the advent of the 1996 elections in which the party proved victorious. Particularly the section "Referentiekader voor het beleid naar het jaar 2000 toe en daarna – Centrale doelstellingen" is instructive.

8. Moskos (1967a:33-40) classified West Indian leaders into three basic types: true nationalists, acquiescing nationalists (reluctant, dutiful, and opportunistic), and colonialists. Applying this typology to Suriname leaders, one might associate the principle classes with Bruma, Pengel, and Lachmon respectively.

9. In Bruma's words (1963:6): "The nation is the two-fold unity of soil and people." Soil referred to the Suriname territory, but also alluded to the common fate of slaves, indentured laborers, and their descendants, who had worked the plantations and had given their lives for the cause of liberty. Thirty-five years later, the contrast between this celebration, if not sanctification, of Suriname soil and the rapidity with which Suriname governments in the 1990s have granted timber and gold concessions to foreign-owned companies of often dubious reputation, is striking. The expansionist activities of Asian timber corporations (Musa, Beryaya, Barito, Tacoba) and Canadian gold corporations (Golden Star, Cambior) are not only at the expense of the local population (whose rights are ignored and whose way of life is threatened), but they also radiate a negative effect on the national economy (which is denied substantial taxes and levies), environmental circumstances (the devastation of the tropical rain forest and pollution of rivers and creeks are progressing steadily), and the relations between capital and forest districts (accumulating the wealth of a small urban elite, accentuating the remote conditions Amerindians and Maroons live in, with only few exceptions). See also article by Price in this issue.

10. Discussing ethnic disparity, nationalism, and migration, Mahabir (1996:285) reports that "at least three contemporary organizations in Trinidad and one in Canada have called for the establishment of an Indian homeland in the Americas by the unification of Trinidad, Guyana and Surinam." There is no indication whatsoever that the idea of an Indian homeland is considered a serious option by the Hindostani leadership in Suriname. Around 1975 and during the so-called domestic war (1986-92) dissident groups of Hindostani in Suriname occasionally pleaded for the establishment of a separate Hindostani state in the western part of the country (Nickerie). Their ideas, however, never met with substantial interest nor did they receive appreciable support. It does not seem likely that the ethnic nationalist scenarios Mahabir hints at, would be adopted by Hindostani organizations in Suriname.

11. Stone 1983 and Danns 1983 examine the legacy of authoritarian rule in the Anglophone Caribbean.

12. For a provisional version of this model, see Smith 1973:35-37, 39-41. An alternative typology is provided by Haas (1986:729-34), who distinguishes seven manifestations of nationalist ideologies, four "revolutionary" and three "syncretist" ones. He claims that the revolutionary ideologies insist on drastic institutional change, whereas the syncretist ideologies try to achieve a compromise with the past, taking a conservative stance towards modern rules and values. In a two-page matrix, Haas links each of the seven ideologies to seven, what he calls, dimensions. These dimensions pertain to the core values of the traditional culture of the nation, the things the nation should borrow from other cultures, the nation's claim to historical distinctiveness, the territory of the nation, the relations to other nations, the proper institutional structure of the nation and the historical mission of the nation. Together the manifestations and dimensions produce an ideological framework that takes into account the variety of trends covered by the flag of nationalism, but simultaneously allows for so much differentiation that it fails to generate clearcut and useful types of nationalism. Haas's (1986:732-33) "Whig" and "synthetic" type of nationalist ideology bear some resemblance to the ideology of Suriname nationalism, yet neither of them fully converges with the idiosyncrasies of the Caribbean sample.

13. The importance of territory for Caribbean national identity is discussed in Richardson 1992:187-91, 202-3.

14. "Opo! Kondreman oen opo! Sranangron e kari oen." See Trefossa 1977:73, 101-4. The example set by Trefossa, the first Surinamer who published a collection of poems in Sranantongo in 1957, was followed by many other poets, who celebrated the Suriname soil and made it a regular point of reference in their work.

15. In fact Haas agrees with Smith (1976:8-9), although the latter accentuates the "religious" symbolism of nationalism.

16. In the early and mid-1980s, the military regime put colorful billboards along "Revolution Square" (now Independence Square). These panels depicted Suriname history as an ongoing struggle of the people for unity and liberation. Imperialism and colonialism, the country's "worst enemies," were identified with the Netherlands. This Cuba-inspired way of transmitting a political message, however, did not have the desired effect. See Oostindie 1997:316-17.

17. The pictures represent economic activity in agriculture (bananas, rice), industry (bauxite, oil), and forestry (timber), with the exception of the picture printed on the 25 Suriname Guilder note, which shows the popular swimmer Anthony Nesty, winner of Suriname's first Olympic gold medal (butterfly stroke) at the 1988 games in Seoul and of the gold medal at the 1990 Goodwill Games in Seattle.

18. Adhin's pivotal contribution *Eenheid in verscheidenheid* (Unity in diversity) was originally published in 1957 and reprinted in 1978 and 1997.

19. In 1995 the Ministry of Education in Suriname issued a CD called "Sranan Mamio: Diversity in Sound" to commemorate twenty years of independence. The Ministry wished to present to the Suriname community a collection of songs in which the people's identification with their own soil and the love for their own country were expressed. The compact disc served as a popular business gift, not unlike the many *mamio* picture books on Suriname which have been published since 1954.

20. Supporters of the unity in diversity concept often argue that integration in Suriname is growing, taking into consideration the vivacity and flexibility of popular culture. Although I subscribe to the view that developments in music, dance, sports, and cookery in Suriname exhibit a dynamic blend of styles and influences, a preparedness to cross ethnic borders and an appreciation for the achievements of rival groups, in my opinion these attainments belong to a category fundamentally different from the common interests, values, beliefs, and attitudes generally considered essential in integration processes. This, however, does not alter the fact that the unity in diversity concept, particularly as applied politically by Lachmon, has contributed to a softening of ethnic opposition in Suriname and has prevented Creole-Hindustani conflicts to lead to bloodshed and barbarity.

21. The national flag was adjusted in 1975, the most important adaption being the replacement of the five separate stars (representing the most prominent ethnic groups) by one single star (symbolizing the unity of the Suriname people). See Dew 1978:126, 196.

22. See also *De Ware Tijd* July 3 and 7, 1993.

23. Boni (?-1793) is Suriname's most famous Maroon leader. He was one of the masterminds behind the guerrilla wars that upset the colony between 1765 and 1793. The life of Boni and his dedication to the cause of freedom has been a source of inspiration for artists, writers, and (nationalist) politicians alike. Anton de Kom (1898-1945), a charismatic labor leader, was arrested and expelled from Suriname in 1933, following successful attempts to organize the Suriname working class. In his classic work *Wij slaven van Suriname* (1934) De Kom propagated solidarity among Suriname workers blending socialist views with a strong anticolonial stand. J.G.A. Koenders (1886-1957) is regarded as the founding father of Suriname cultural nationalism. A teacher by profession, Koenders fought the colonial policy of assimilation and tried to promote knowledge of and appreciation for expressions of Creole culture. The association *Wie Eegie Sanie* named itself after one of his Sranantongo poems.

24. Haakmat (1996:88-105, 158-69) offers a readable though partial attempt to portray Bouterse as a national leader, with a pedigree including Doedel, De Kom, Pengel, and Bruma. Louis Doedel (1905-80), like De Kom, played a prominent role in the Suriname labor movement in the 1930s. He spent most of his life in a mental hospital, some say by order of the colonial authorities who wanted to dispose of a troublesome opponent.

25. The statue of Simón Bolívar was a gift of the Venezuelan government to the Suriname people. The statue of Mahatma Gandhi was erected on the initiative of the Suriname association *Hindustani Nawdjuwak Sabha* (HNS).

26. For photographs and brief but adequate descriptions of the various monuments, see Lie a Kwie & Esajas 1997.

27. Smith (1993:64-66) discusses five collective functions of visual arts: didactic and emulation, celebration, commemoration, crystallization, and evocation. The first three functions apply to the statues and monuments reviewed in this article. For reflections on nation-building and literature, see Van Kempen (1989:61-94) and Meel (1990:271-81).

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Caliban's Curse: George Lamming and the Revisioning of History. SUPRIYA NAIR. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996. viii + 171 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.50)

Phyllis Shand Allfrey: A Caribbean Life. LIZABETH PARAVISINI-GEBERT. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996. xii + 335 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00, Paper US\$ 18.95)

Of the four books to be considered here, those on Brathwaite, Selvon, and Lamming fit snugly together into a natural category of literature that has to do with the emergence of a creole or African-centered Caribbean culture, and related issues of race, color, class, history, and nationality. The fourth is a biography of Phyllis Shand Allfrey, a white West Indian, who is of an altogether different race, color, and class than from the other three. Yet the four books are linked together by nationality, for Allfrey and the others are all citizens of one region, the English-speaking West Indies, which, as the Federation of the West Indies between 1958 and 1962, formed a single nation.

The Art of Kamau Brathwaite is a collection of critical pieces on the work of a poet who occupies a position second if not equal to Derek

Walcott in the pantheon of heroes of West Indian poetry. Curiously, the rivalry between these two poets, which raged so fiercely in the 1970s, is scarcely considered at all, but this only confirms the seriousness of the volume in concentrating on the critical substance and theoretical development of Brathwaite's art, rather than on changeable issues of reputation or popularity. Stewart Brown begins with an informative introduction that leaves no doubt about Brathwaite's extraordinarily versatile achievement as poet, historian, essayist, and cultural theorist as well as literary critic. Then, largely by means of critical essays by different experts, he provides informed commentary on the breadth, depth, and variety of Brathwaite's total achievement.

Brathwaite's linguistic dexterity and artistic originality are illustrated in individual essays by J. Edward Chamberlin, Maureen Warner-Lewis, Mervyn Morris, and Nathaniel Mackey (who also does an interview with Brathwaite). "Brathwaite and Jazz," by Louis James, documents the influence of jazz in Brathwaite's poetry, while Brathwaite's work as a cultural critic is surveyed in an essay by Glyne A. Griffith. A sense of historical perspective is contributed by Mackey's interview, for instance, and by essays like Anne Walmsey's dealing with the Caribbean Artists Movement, a pioneering group of West Indian artists and intellectuals who used to meet in London in the 1960s and looked to Brathwaite perhaps as their guiding light. Close readings of poems are given by Stewart Brown and Gordon Rohlehr and, as a sample of the master's voice itself, we get a republication of "Metaphors of Underdevelopment: A Poem for Hernan Cortez," which Stewart Brown describes as Brathwaite's "major essay of recent years." With all this, plus a detailed bibliography of Brathwaite's writing, both creative and critical, *The Art of Kamau Brathwaite* offers probably the most comprehensive study that exists of Brathwaite's writing and its place in the literary history of the Caribbean.

What Stewart Brown states as the theme of Brathwaite's first poetic trilogy, *The Arrivants*, may be taken as a principal theme of his entire oeuvre: "that of re-birth, re-discovery, reclamation of identity for West Indian people through an examination of their roots in the African past" (p. 10). If this theme exposes Brathwaite to a charge of Afro-centricity, the charge becomes less valid in his later works – for example, in his second poetic trilogy, or in "Metaphors of Underdevelopment" which take cognizance of the contribution to Caribbean culture of pre-Columbian, Caribbean aboriginals. Brathwaite, after all, teaches history at university. It was this historical expertise that led him to reassert both the African folk basis of West Indian society and intellectual links between Afro-Caribbean thinkers such as Aimé Césaire, C.L.R. James, Frantz Fanon, George

Lamming, Édouard Glissant, and Walter Rodney. It was also his awareness of history that led Brathwaite to spend several years working in Ghana before he attempted to reconstruct, in poetic form, the fate of African experience in the New World. The history of the African past runs throughout Brathwaite's writing and provides a basis for any sense of community or nationality that could later emerge.

Mark Looker's *Atlantic Passages* serves as an excellent introduction to the writing of Samuel Selvon. Not that it lacks the critical insight and perception of *The Art of Kamau Brathwaite*, but it seems geared more to pass information on to the reader than to debate issues. While Selvon's writing may not stress the African folk basis of Caribbean society with quite the same urgency as Brathwaite's, it certainly focuses on black or working-class citizens, ordinary people whose lives reflect a composite, creole culture or identity. Language is an important aspect of this identity. The subtitle of Looker's book emphasizes the role of language which is as crucial to Selvon's writing as it is to Brathwaite's. It isn't simply a matter of using language skilfully or dexterously, as most writers do, with varying success; it is rather the fact that Brathwaite and Selvon are West Indians who lacked a literary tradition of their own, and therefore had to invent new literary forms, and create fresh technical strategies for communicating the raw speech idioms, and exotic experience of people, black or working-class West Indians, who had virtually never been written about before. In Selvon's case, this type of literary innovation was quite intimately bound up with issues of cultural identity and political nationality.

Atlantic Passages is divided into ten chapters, each dealing with one of Selvon's novels. The first two chapters, based respectively on *A Brighter Sun* (Selvon's first novel) and *An Island Is a World* (his second), carry revealing titles – "Constructing a Community" and "Identifying a Nation" – for both novels appeared in the early 1950s, a period when decolonization was in the air, and when freedom from colonial rule was felt to be synonymous with cultural nationality and political nationhood. Looker is absolutely thorough in his close analysis of each text, and in the impressive array of quotations and references that he offers from almost every critic who has written about Selvon's work.

If Selvon's first two novels explore issues of West Indian ethnicity and nationality, his third novel (*The Lonely Londoners*, considered in a chapter entitled "Inventing Black London") introduces a related but slightly different subject which was to preoccupy Selvon for much of his subsequent career: the fortunes of West Indian immigrants abroad, particularly in England. This immigrant theme is found in the third novel, *The Housing Lark* (Chapter 6), in *Moses Ascending* (Chapter 9), and in *Moses*

Migrating (Chapter 10). As Looker confirms, Selvon's most remarkable achievement in these novels is the invention of a special language, based on creole speech but versatile enough to be accessible to non-creole speakers or readers. In Looker's words, "*The Lonely Londoners* recasts the urban novel, gives it a new shape and a new language which rehistoricizes the new city – its geography and its monuments, its people and their struggles, their energy, their humor and vitality" (p. 60). Selvon's London, in other words, is emphatically not the London of Dickens, with its murky atmosphere of grey fog, meandering river, and ever-present criminal underclass. The city in Selvon's novels is black London with an unlikely Caribbean blend of impulsive bravado, casual gaiety, easy-going camaraderie, and generally outlandish but good-humored behavior. Invoking the critic Gordon Rohlehr, Looker argues that Dickens's city has been transformed by West Indian immigrants who have imposed their own language on London and remade the city as their own.

Atlantic Passages is lucid and readable. It is so clearly organized, so thoroughly researched and carefully presented, that it omits almost nothing about Selvon, and this bears the stamp of an academic thesis transformed into a book. In that sense, *Atlantic Passages* is an excellent handbook for students, although that should not detract from the author's achievement in providing valuable critical insights into Selvon's fiction.

It has now become a stock item in West Indian literary folklore that Samuel Selvon and George Lamming traveled together on the same boat to England in 1950 in search of their literary fortune. Not only is the story true, but Selvon and Lamming did go on to produce what might be called "foundation texts" in modern West Indian literature – Selvon's *A Brighter Sun* (1952), and Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953). Not only that, but in his outspoken advocacy of the West Indian peasantry, working class, or folk, as the true subject of West Indian literature, Lamming has continuously held Selvon up as a shining light among West Indian writers and artists. *Caliban's Curse*, by Supriya Nair, examines Lamming's novels in roughly the same light, that of speaking up for Shakespeare's Caliban, a despised and dispossessed creature like the West Indian folk, who must rally their resources against the usurper Prospero before they can attain freedom, independence, and dignity.

As a classic work of West Indian literature, Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* has probably been studied more closely than any other Caribbean literary text. But it is a mark of Nair's originality and independence as a critic that she does not begin with Lamming's celebrated first novel and work chronologically through to his sixth *Natives of My Person*. For Nair is not only interested in presenting the salient features of Lamming's

fiction; she has an ideological or theoretical axe to grind, namely that Caliban (the West Indian folk) can regain his patrimony from Prospero through political action. To prove her case she enlists the services of formidable literary theorists from Bakhtin and Lukács to Edward Said. Nor does she neglect more home-grown Latin American and Caribbean names, for example, Antonio Benítez-Rojo, Roberto Retamar, and Gordon Rohlehr.

Caliban's Curse is divided into two parts – “Voyages,” which deals with the author’s second, fifth, and sixth novels (those in which fictional and historical voyages are made) and “Intellectuals,” which treats the author’s first, third, and fourth novels (the so-called narratives of “nationalist activities” in which West Indians are seen exploring their history while trying to achieve political self-determination and nationhood). Yet neither the novels in “Voyages” nor those in “Intellectuals” demonstrate how Caliban’s curse has been successfully lifted and real nationhood achieved. What we are shown is merely the possibility of the curse being lifted through political activity that is inspired by sound historical awareness. A federalist West Indian identity is discussed in *The Emigrants* and *Water with Berries*, but it does not actually materialize. Lamming is no impractical idealist. His novels dramatize the possibility of West Indian nationhood, but they also acknowledge a host of social, ethnic, and territorial problems, together with difficulties in leadership, which tend to stifle the natural evolution of cultural or political nationality.

Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert’s *Phyllis Shand Allfrey* is a biography that boasts not only of thorough biographical research, but literary appreciation, psychological insight, historical information, and splendid storytelling skills. The subject, Phyllis Shand Allfrey (1908-86), grew up in Dominica, in a white planter family whose fortunes had declined by the time she was born. There is a brief comparison with the better-known writer from Dominica, Jean Rhys (1894-1979), whose path crossed with Allfrey’s for a short time, and whose career bears some resemblance at least to the literary side of Allfrey.

Paravisini-Gebert’s portrait of Allfrey’s childhood in Dominica and of Dominican society in general is densely detailed, vivid, colorful, and true to life. Her Dominica is a typical British Caribbean colony with deeply ingrained, historic taboos about race, class, and color, and struggling by the middle of the century to express its longing for freedom from colonial rule. Although moulded by these mores, and wholly Dominican in temper and outlook, Allfrey, like Rhys, leaves her home island and is away for twenty-six years, mainly in England, where she becomes a Fabian socialist and an energetic worker for the British Labour Party. At the same time, she

meets literary people and becomes a writer of fiction and poetry. As evidence of her indefatigable research, Paravisini-Gebert leaves no stone unturned in reporting every incident or contact, whether domestic, literary, or political, that may have influenced Allfrey. Nothing is spared, however negative – turbulent family relationships, sexual liaisons, financial problems, political conflicts, or literary struggles. The result is a full-blooded, convincing portrait of a white West Indian woman with some literary talent, enormous energy, formidable willpower, and the somewhat contradictory political instincts of a true democrat, earnestly pursuing her prospects, both in England and the Caribbean, during the 1940s and 1950s.

Allfrey's main literary achievement consists of *In Circles: Poems* (1940) and her autobiographical novel *The Orchid House* (1953). There are also poems, short stories, and articles published in journals and newspapers, together with several unpublished novels and other manuscripts. It is astonishing how closely Paravisini-Gebert has been able to link details from her writing to events and personalities from Allfrey's life. She makes no bones about the fact that Allfrey was a very autobiographical writer: "Phyllis – quite incapable of pure invention in fiction – never wrote anything that could not be traced to an episode she had lived or witnessed herself, or to characters she had known, hated, or loved" (p. 82). No doubt partly because of this autobiographical element, as the portrait of a white West Indian family, *The Orchid House* – Allfrey's central achievement – remains something of an oddity among works of the 1950s, devoted to exaltation of the West Indian folk, peasantry, or working class. Paravisini-Gebert is not unaware of this, as we can see from her rather rueful mention of "the anticolonial, African-centred ideology that dominated Caribbean criticism in the 1950s and 1960s" (p. 83).

But Allfrey's political career is even more notable than her achievement as a writer. After her political grounding with the Labour Party in England in the 1940s, she returned to Dominica in 1953, and helped to establish the Dominica Labour Party in 1954. In 1958 she won a seat in the parliament of the Federation of the West Indies, and was appointed Minister of Labour and Social Affairs – the only female member of the cabinet. Through her inspiring research and skill with anecdotes about Allfrey's contact with famous people, particularly politicians, Paravisini-Gebert recounts her subject's political activities with the same precision, verve, and humor as the rest of her career. The dissolution of the Federation in 1962 spelled the end of Allfrey's political career. Yet her indomitable spirit was not to be deterred, and, along with her husband, she founded *The Star*, a Dominican weekly paper which she edited until its demise in 1982.

The contrast between Allfrey's career and those of Brathwaite, Selvon, and Lamming could not be more stark. This illustrates fundamental problems which stem from the ethnic and social diversity of the West Indies, and affect both the region's history and future prospects. On one side we have West Indian diversity as reflected by Allfrey's career, and on the other is the Afro-centric claim to West Indian history and nationhood as advanced most eloquently by Brathwaite and Lamming. If the opposition between the two sides seems irreconcilable, we must not forget that the Afro-centricity of the 1950s and 1960s was a reaction to enforced colonial attitudes that had inspired the dehumanization of black people for centuries, and denigrated their African origins as savage, something to be forgotten or hotly disputed. It was inevitable that such racism should be contradicted, which is what Brathwaite and Lamming did in asserting the historical validity of their African origins and its formative role, through four centuries of slavery, in the social and cultural evolution of the West Indies. Whether some Afro-centric writers or critics overstated their case is a matter of controversy. But whatever the ultimate decision about the exact African contribution to Caribbean culture, the region cannot ignore the diversity of contributions from its aboriginal inhabitants and from Europeans, Africans, and Asians who came later. This complex legacy is what has restricted the smooth evolution of cultural and political nationality in the West Indies. It is also possible to regard this complex legacy as one of richness and untold potential. That is not what is suggested by these four books, but it remains a hope cherished by many West Indians.

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CUBA: TRANSITION OR DISINTEGRATION?

Toward a New Cuba? Legacies of a Revolution. MIGUEL ANGEL CENTENO & MAURICIO FONT (eds.). Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997. ix + 245 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

Essays on Cuban History: Historiography and Research. LOUIS A. PÉREZ, JR. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994. xiv + 306 pp. (Cloth US\$ 44.95)

Cuba's Second Economy: From Behind the Scenes to Center Stage. JORGE F. PÉREZ-LÓPEZ. New Brunswick NJ: Transaction, 1995. 221 pp. (Cloth US\$ 32.95)

Sport in Cuba: The Diamond in the Rough. PAULA J. PETTAVINO & GERALYN PYE. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994. ix + 301 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.94, Paper US\$ 19.95)

Cuba is clearly at yet another major turning point, and the four books under review here testify, each in its way, to this. Two are single-authored monographs (one on sport, the other on the informal economy) one is a single-authored collection of essays on history and historiography; and one is a multidisciplinary anthology of essays by various authors. In approach, they cover a broad political spectrum, and all are concerned with an understanding of process in Cuba, whether prior to or since the 1959 revolution, pre- or post-1989, or during the 1990s.

Chronologically, it makes sense to start with the book that deals primarily with history. Louis Pérez is a prolific historian of Cuba, and essays he has written over a period of more than two decades have been reprinted together in this volume. The book sets in sharp relief how the very revo-

lution of 1959 transformed the study of Cuban history. On the island and in the United States, historians set out to determine the sources of radical change. As Pérez demonstrates, historiographical concerns of virtually all scholars have centered around colonialism, slavery, racism, imperialism, nationalism, and revolution, as well as issues of power and powerlessness, dictatorship and democracy, populism and mass mobilization, and social justice. Yet there have been changes over time, in tandem with changes in Cuba, as well as historiographical trends and methodological advances outside Cuba, plus availability of and access to historical sources.

The first section on history deals with two broad thematic areas that loom large in Cuban history: the Cuba-U.S. relation and Cuba's quest for national identity. One group of essays focuses on the imperial, hegemonic drive behind U.S. intervention and collaboration, 1898-99, introducing U.S. education and the English language in occupied Cuba, 1898-1902, and paving the way for North American Protestant missionaries, 1898-1920. Another group explores the history of nineteenth-century radical worker emigrés in Tampa, of whom Pérez himself is a descendant: one charts the process whereby exiles became immigrants and two other short pieces retell the reminiscences of a reader in a Tampa cigar factory and an Ybor City cigar roller. There is one final essay on army politics in socialist Cuba, 1959-69.

The second section of the book delineates the varying historiographical approaches, and the third and last section suggests possibilities for research, providing a useful resource listing of major and lesser-known holdings – the *Archivo Nacional de Cuba*, the U.S. Bureau of Insular Affairs, Protestant Missionary Archival Records, and Manuscript Collections. The second section is the one in which Pérez truly comes into his own. A fascinating opening essay sets the scene, telling the story of how the classic North American *History of the Cuban Republic*, by Charles Chapman, first published in 1927 and reissued in 1969, itself came about in response to U.S. policy needs in Cuba. By 1923, U.S. ambassador Enoch Crowder had failed in his political mission and Chapman was funded to examine especially the organization and working of national government in Cuba. Although Chapman had serious run-ins with Crowder, the end-product, Pérez argues, revealed a striking conformity to the policy imperatives that inspired its writing.

Subsequent essays similarly contextualize the twentieth-century historiography of U.S.-Cuban relations and Cuban historiography at the service of the revolution (1959-79). And there are two retrospective surveys, one of the formidable corpus of study generated over twenty-five years of the revolution and the other of thirty years of Cuban studies. A

major point to emerge is that while history played an important part in Cuba, with themes of struggle and continuity appealing to the past in legitimating the roots of revolution, history has long been marginal to the mainstream of U.S.- and Cuban-American-dominated "Cubanology." And yet, Pérez is quick to remind us, it is necessary to think historically about the revolution, "to develop a perspective on a process that is at once product of and prism for the past" (p. 178).

Of the three books on the post-1959 period, the most straightforward in its narrative is the one on sport by U.S.-based Paula Pettavino and Australian-based Geralyn Pye. Despite the obvious success and political importance of sport in revolutionary Cuba, theirs is the first major study on the subject. The authors, both political scientists, analyze how and why sports should have been accorded such high priority that Cuba had become a world sporting power by the mid-1970s, from then on challenging the United States in the race for Olympic and Pan-American gold medals, and continuing to do so even through the crisis 1990s.

A background chapter on pre-1959 highlights how sport in Cuba was essentially elitist. The major exceptions were boxing and baseball, which provided a route out of poverty (including some striking instances of black Cuban players in the American Negro League). The emergence of baseball as Cuba's national sport is in itself paradoxical, given that it originated from the United States, which was to become the arch-enemy of radical Cuban nationalism.

Key to Cuba's post-1959 achievements in sport was a two-pronged policy of "image-building" and "egalitarianism," a system of physical culture alongside highly selective, intensive, competitive athletics. The motto of "sport for one and all" sat easily with socialist revolution and made for successful international diplomacy. It entailed putting in place a national sports industry, budget, structure, and administration, training personnel, and enlisting the support of the mass organizations for participation in sports. The claim was, first, to promote the development of sports and, second, to seek champions. The two, of course, were interrelated, as "the more people practicing, the more people from which to choose" (p. 127). However, sports schools functioned as veritable grooming grounds, backed by a formidable sports medicine industry, in polishing the "diamonds" from the "rough." The shrinking resource environment caused by 1980s economic strictures and 1990s collapse heightened the tensions between producing champions at the expense of mass participation, especially when the former has international as well as national political kudos. This the authors document well, expressing their hope that what has been achieved will not be lost and that a balance can be struck between the two.

If sport might be seen as the thin end of the wedge in 1990s Cuba, the coping strategies of the Cuban people in an economy that on conservative estimates plummeted by some 50 percent certainly cannot. A recognized weakness in the Cuban government's post-1989 economic crisis strategy has been that of establishing linkages between the export-led and domestic sectors. Thus, the 1994 bottoming out of the crisis centered almost exclusively on export economic indicators, while the domestic economy lagged behind. Unemployment and shortages of even basic foodstuffs and supplies resulted in significantly lowered nutritional and health indicators, especially among such high risk groups as children, the elderly, and the infirm. On a scale unwitnessed since the late 1960s, Cubans were catapulted en masse into a whole range of licit, semi-licit, and illicit activities essential for their everyday survival.

The fact that Cuban American economist Jorge Pérez-López was researching his book prior to 1994 makes his study all the more remarkable. Prior to 1989, neither island Cuban nor Cuban American economists had deemed the plethora of economic activities beyond those of the state worthy of serious attention, and only reluctantly had the crisis forced their hand. This was a first full-fledged study, though based entirely on the "open literature" available abroad, to chart how the crisis had propelled the "second economy" from "behind the scenes to center stage" and to discuss the second economy's potential role in market transition. Defining the second economy as that part of the economy under private control, Pérez-López differentiates between activities that are perfectly legal (and regulated), those that are shadow (that go on willy-nilly), and those that are illegal (against the law). His argument is that what is crucial for gauging the transition is how rapidly the state moves to fully legalize "shadow" activities, which he describes as a "reservoir of entrepreneurial talent" that could be the future backbone of a private, small business sector.

The government has been forced to pass measures that recognize the second economy – for example, dollarization, self-employment, farmers' markets – and has also shown great ambivalence, reining back on steps that have been taken. Pérez-López argues that there are political and economic consequences of non-action: when people must skirt around and even break the law for their own economic survival, respect for socialist norms must erode and discontent with the state must rise. The dangers, of course, as evidenced in several post-socialist Central and Eastern European countries, are that this sector becomes an undesirable mafia-type minefield.

The most recent of the four books is challenging. It sets out asking a futuristic question: What might happen in Cuba? The book attempts to answer that question with contributions from a 1995 Conference at Princeton University by fifteen economists, sociologists, political scientists, and historians, thirteen of them U.S.-based – nine Cuban American, three North American and one British – and two island-based Cuban. Explanations for the Cuban transition, or lack thereof, are sought in both international constraints and domestic political culture. The book rejects deterministic arguments and takes an “eclectic historical approach”: the path followed by Cuba is shaped by structural limitations, which are historical products, and yet constructed by choices made in a variety of scenarios.

The book has two main parts: “Toward a New Politics” and “Toward the Market.” Part 1 opens with Miguel Angel Centeno outlining Cuba’s search for alternatives, beyond “socialism or death.” He distinguishes between scenarios including Fidel Castro – which maintain the political status quo – and those requiring his exit – which might spell chaos, the “Russian nightmare,” and authoritarian capitalism. He concludes that Cuba’s problem is what Gramsci called “disastrous equilibrium”: the regime may not collapse soon but is also not a viable choice. Marifeli Pérez-Stable expounds the exhaustion of politics, with widespread cynicism corroding the regime. She examines four critical elements in the regime’s strategy: ideology, elite dynamics, mass politics, and the management of economic reform. She, too, concludes that the Cuban government is stable as (contrary to comparative experience in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Asia) the conditions for transition – the inability of elites to continue governing in the same way and the unwillingness of the citizenry to accept being governed thus – have not yet coalesced.

Francisco León takes a somewhat different tack in countering assumptions of the strong state and weak society. He revisits the old parody of *sociolismo* and argues that a wide spectrum of organized and unorganized interests are redistributing social power. Alejandro de la Fuente and Laurence Glasco home in on the summer 1994 Havana riot, in which many of the rioters were young blacks and mulattos. Formulating a provocative question – Are blacks “getting out of control”? – they conducted an exploratory poll on the issue of race, not least whether blacks are perceived and perceive themselves as beneficiaries of, and therefore loyal to, the revolution. Their results suggest that what was at stake was a generational rather than a race issue.

Exploring U.S.-Cuba relations, Gillian Gunn asks: Are the two governments inept? Is each confronted with a domestic context in which any

other policy is perceived as threatening to the current power structure? Are the transition processes underway in both countries – in one from communism and in the other from the cold war – contributing to government schizophrenia? Exploring avenues of change, Max Castro deconstructs the ideology of exile: from traditional 1960s Cuban-exile political culture, through continuing hegemony of the right in Cuban-exile politics, to the emergent 1990s transitional center that hasn't quite taken off.

Mauricio Font opens Part 2 by contextualizing the timid 1990s reforms: the foreign investment law, adjustment and diversification, the internal market, and the role of the state and ideology. Susan Eckstein addresses the depth and structural roots of the crisis and state efforts to mitigate it, from early 1990s socialist-style, market-oriented, and "precapitalistic survival" strategies to 1994 reforms. She acknowledges the tensions implicit in policies that may appear economically rational but are not necessarily politically tolerable. In the bifurcation between Cuba's socialist-peso and internationalized-dollar economies, Archibald Ritter argues for a reunification of the two into a single mixed economy if recovery, adjustment, and transition are to occur. Jorge Pérez-López provides a synthesis of the main argument to be found in his book – the link between Cuba's second economy and the market – drawing on the comparative experiences of Hungary, Poland, the former East Germany, Romania, and Bulgaria. The need to move away from a dual economic system to a new vision of a reformed and integrated economy is reiterated by Pedro Monreal, who also outlines the main features of the economic debate in what he describes as a theoretical vacuum. Julio Carranza Valdés in turn charts the policies of financial equilibrium, monetary circulation, enterprise reform, and the new role of the state, and concludes by calling for political audacity in moving from partial and sectoral changes to a systemic model change.

Reflecting as they do views from within, Carranza and Monreal would provide a fitting end to this review essay. However, as a historian, I am inevitably drawn by the poignancy of the postscript by Manuel Moreno Fraginals. He poses the question: Transition to what? His response is that there is no transition but a disintegration – social and physical – of Cuban civil society, that must and can be brought to a halt. History will not stand still, but, as Moreno himself appealed to his audience, it is incumbent on us all to work for dialogue toward that end.

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OUT OF BALANCE? *KONESANS* AND FIRST WORLD
KNOWLEDGES IN CARIBBEAN WOMEN'S STUDIES

We Paid Our Dues: Women Trade Union Leaders of the Caribbean. A. LYNN BOLLES. Washington DC: Howard University Press, 1996. xxxviii + 250 pp. (Paper US\$ 21.95)

Gender: A Caribbean Multi-Disciplinary Perspective. ELSA LEO-RHYNIE, BARBARA BAILEY & CHRISTINE BARROW (eds.). Kingston: Ian Randle, 1997. xix + 358 pp. (Paper n.p.)

Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century. CONSUELO LÓPEZ SPRINGFIELD (ed.). Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997. xxi + 316 pp. (Cloth US\$ 35.00, Paper US\$ 17.95)

Two weeks before I began writing this review essay, I had the misfortune to contract food poisoning while visiting New York. I was admitted to St. Vincent's Hospital in Greenwich Village where I found myself under the capable care of a team of West Indian nurses. At the time, I didn't give this much thought; I was simply happy to be getting good care far from home. The day before I was released, my right arm swelled up from the intravenous drip that had been delivering fluids and antibiotics into my body. It was first noticed by one of the Jamaican nurses, who told me that the IV had "infiltrated" my arm and that, as a result, my "fluids were out of balance," and this was keeping me from getting well. She promptly pointed this out to another nurse, who took out the IV and stuck another one into my left arm.

Reading several of the contributions to *Daughters of Caliban* a few days later, I was led to reflect on the specifically Caribbean theory of body and health in the nurse's explanation for my continued illness. Elisa

Sobo's chapter documents beliefs about maintaining flows of fluids and other substances into and out of the body as central to women's health traditions in rural Jamaica. The body is conceptualized as "an open system that must stay *equalized*" (p. 145, original emphasis). Rather than espousing a germ theory of disease, with its associated metaphors of enemy forces invading a body defended by an army of white blood cells, the Jamaicans Sobo interviewed articulated a theory of disease based on "imbalances" (p. 147).

Yet my Jamaican nurse had also used the medical term "infiltration," a term that recalls the invasion and battle metaphors of modern medicine. Like Alourdes, the priestess and healer who appears in Karen McCarthy Brown's essay in the *Daughters* volume, the nurse hailed from Brooklyn, not rural Jamaica. Brown uses the case of Alourdes to point up the "root metaphors" of Western medicine, chiefly the property metaphor that casts medical knowledge as privileged, owned by specialists, and the power to heal as the possession of pieces of property – "medical implements, drugs, and machines," "diplomas, licenses, and white coats" (p. 123). In contrast, Haitian healers stress *konesans*, or knowledge constituted by open lines of communication with spirits, "heat" associated with balance and imbalance, and the sociality of the relational matrix within which people live their lives and define their personas. As Brown writes, these metaphors cast the power to heal as coming from sources beyond the healer herself. "[I]t is never appropriate to think of the healer as 'having' healing power in the way one can 'have' a piece of property" (p. 134).

Each of these three books on gender in the Caribbean makes contributions by pointing up the cultural politics of caregiving and nurture within which Caribbean women, in the West Indies and in transnational circuits, struggle and build lives. Each challenges "the myth of the West Indian matriarch and the passive Hispanic Caribbean woman," as Consuelo López Springfield puts it in her introduction to *Daughters* (p. xviii). Both myths are built around the Western conceit of "woman" as responsible for the private sphere of family, child-rearing, and health. Yet as Brown, Sobo, and the Jamaican nurse demonstrate, the kinds of care, the boundaries of the private, and the knowledges of women are not neatly separated off from other social forces, powers, or transnational movements – including transnational movements of academic theorizing.

Daughters of Caliban offers an introduction by the editor and thirteen essays, divided into five sections, on the relationship between Caribbean studies and women's studies, women and work, health, law and politics, and popular culture. The volume's coverage of the region is particularly good for a collection of this type, with essays almost evenly divided bet-

ween the Hispanic and Anglophone Caribbean, and one article on language policy in Guadeloupe.

Gender: A Caribbean Multi-Disciplinary Perspective offers twenty-four substantive chapters divided into six sections, with helpful, short introductions by the editors preceding each section. It is the "first publication of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies," established in 1993 out of the Women and Development Studies groups of UWI (p. ix). The sections parallel closely those of *Daughters*: gender and development, law, education, the humanities, health, and agriculture. The chapters are a mixed bag. Most exclusively focus on the Anglophone Caribbean, but three (Geertje Lycklama à Nieholt, Carol Smart, and Bernadette Farquhar) are theoretical discussions without any specific reference to the Caribbean. Many of the chapters are transcripts of talks given at a series of seminars held between 1986 and 1994 and sponsored by the Project of Cooperation in Teaching and Research in Women and Development Studies at UWI, and the Institute of Social Studies at The Hague (p. xi). In the volume's introduction, Joycelin Massiah spells out the main foci of the seminars: they were concerned with methodology (p. xiii), with links outside the university community, with merging "the theoretical and the empirical" (p. xv); and, especially, with policy and management guided by the assumption that the "multi-dimensional nature of the issue of gender itself demands a multifaceted response" (p. xvii).

Bolles's *We Paid Our Dues: Women Trade Union Leaders of the Caribbean* puts women's narratives of participation in trade union movements at the center of a new Caribbean labor history. It consists of seven chapters pegged to different stages in the life narratives that Bolles collected from women trade unionists, as well as a nicely articulated theoretical and methodological introduction and a conclusion that reflects on the politics and practice of academic research. The book also contains one appendix outlining the Project for the Development of Caribbean Women in Trade Unions (by Marva Phillips), and another reproducing Bolles's questionnaire.

While these texts offer a mine of information, I was frustrated, especially with the edited collections, by their lack of theoretical focus. However, this frustration stems at least in part from my own location in the theory-driven U.S. academy. In the edited volumes, the essays sometimes speak past or contradict one other. Take Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert's essay in *Daughters*, on the limits of Western feminism for the Caribbean, which proposes that, despite five centuries of colonialism, "Caribbean societies ... have managed to remain profoundly insular" (p. 5) and are "driven as much, if not more, by internal, local concerns than they are by a persistent,

continual, and continuous awareness of a colonial past" (p. 5). She therefore argues for the "limited applicability of European or U.S. theories of feminism and gender relations to a reality that may have been influenced by European American cultural patterns but which developed in fairly *local* ways in response to a collision between autochthonous and foreign cultures" (p. 7, her emphasis). But what's autochthonous in the Caribbean, as Carla Freeman asks in her excellent piece in the same volume on "pink collar" workers in the Barbados offshore information-processing industry? Paravisini-Gebert relies on troubling notions of the "experience" of Caribbean women to contest "theory" which cannot speak to that experience. But experience itself is a construct borne of a particular political and cultural history. And the women writers Paravisini-Gebert chooses as exemplars of autochthonous feminism – Phyllis Shand Allfrey and Jean Rhys – surely had very complicated relationships to the metropolis that profoundly shaped their experience.

Carol Smart's chapter in the *Gender* book provides a useful contrast. While it makes no reference to the Caribbean, it does provide an excellent overview of trends in theory that Smart believes feminists need to move beyond. In reviewing challenges to legal thought, Smart criticizes "feminist empiricism," which basically asks, "how does law affect or alternately ignore women?" and then tries to redress these wrongs. She also criticizes "standpoint feminism," which argues that women's experience gives a view of the truth of the legal system and a basis for a new one.

Smart argues that both positions derive from a liberal realism "in which it is taken for granted that we 'know' what law is, we know who or what 'women' are, and we only have to work on the relationship between these two givens" (p. 86). Her skepticism stems from the positivist bent of both approaches: if we only knew the "truth," we could "fix" things. However, not only do we never know the truth, but we also never know the consequences of our proposals (p. 87), to say nothing of what "women's experience" really is. At the same time, the law will only listen if we speak its language, and in speaking that language we blind ourselves to alternative possibilities. As Smart summarizes, "as long as we collude with the woman that legal discourse has constituted, we can have some purchase, but we do this at the expense of silencing and alienating many actual women for whom we do not speak" (p. 88). We empower "law's version of reality if we occupy the same epistemological and ontological space of law" (p. 89).

With only a handful of exceptions, the essays in the edited volumes fall rather neatly into Smart's two categories. Most adopt feminist empiricism, claiming that if only there were better data on women, and if only these

data were taken into consideration, then public policy and academic inquiry would better address women's needs and contributions. Other essays adopt standpoint feminism, arguing that women's view on matters of policy and culture give purchase on a "real" truth hidden by androcentric perspectives. Bolles's book provides, in contrast, an interesting reformulation of both feminist empiricism and standpoint feminism. It presents new feminist empirical data on women's participation in the trade union movement in terms of women trade unionists' own narratives of their experience, and hence also adopts standpoint feminism. In the process, however, it rewrites the history of the Caribbean and calls into question received categories of historiography and its various "standpoints."

Of the essays that do not fall neatly into Smart's typology, Freeman's is particularly noteworthy. It shows how women's involvement in the off-shore sector as information processors redounds into their identities, and especially the identities they forge through new consumption practices facilitated by their work. But they do not reinvent their identities out of whole cloth; rather, they recuperate higglering, going on company-sponsored shopping sprees and bringing back goods to sell at the workplace. Wages become "seed money" for suitcase trading endeavors (p. 73). As women explore their new "professional" status, they participate in a "globalization of consumption and style" (p. 81). As corporations demand "professional" attire, women workers become concerned with their public persona (p. 83) and very West Indian definitions of respectable "femininity" and "status through appearance" (p. 84). Freeman eloquently summarizes, "[t]he local becomes transnational and the transnational is in turn 'localized' in a frenzied dialectic of new pressures and pleasures across the production/consumption terrain" (p. 86).

Luisa Hernández Angueira's essay in *Daughters* shows how Dominican migrant women get defined as "other" in Puerto Rico, as "their customs and bodies are socially constructed as deviant and unmanageable" (p. 99). The essay demonstrates the class, race, and gender nexus that differentiates Puerto Rican women, who aspire to "normal" patriarchal families representative of a particular class, from Dominican migrant women, who do not, and cannot. Natasha Barnes's essay, also in the *Daughters* volume, is a fascinating history of beauty pageants in Jamaica and the complex negotiations of race and nation that have marked them since their inception. Cynthia Mesh's chapter in the *Daughters* book gives a general history of creole politics in Guadeloupe and relates these to the work of Dany Bébel-Gisler. She notes the historical irony that France established a permanent colony in Guadeloupe in 1635, the same year it

established the Académie Française, highlighting connections among colonialism, language, and gender (p. 23).

The essays that I would place in the "feminist empiricism" category all provide a wealth of information on Caribbean women, if not exactly Caribbean gender or sexuality. These include, in the *Daughters* volume, Mary Johnson Osirim's excellent historical survey of women's participation in the labor market from the colonial period to the present; Caroline Allen's informative review of women, health, and development in the Commonwealth Caribbean; Suzanne LaFont and Deborah Pruitt's essay on family law in Jamaica; and Carollee Bengelsdorf's rich chapter on Cuban women's responses to the recent crisis. Nearly all of the contributions to the *Gender* volume adopt a feminist empiricist approach, as well, and are policy-oriented. The "Gender and Development" and "Gender Issues in Agriculture" sections rightly criticize the equation of "development" with "economic growth" and point toward policy challenges for feminist activism. Johnnetta Cole summarizes the main obstacle, namely, the "myth that third-world culture (for which read backward, primitive ways) and society's gender system (for which read women) are the major obstacles to development" (p. 6). Eileen Boxill, Cherry Brady-Clarke, and Suzanne Ffolkes assess the dilemmas of family law and provide excellent reviews of legal changes relating to children born out of wedlock, property rights, divorce, citizenship, and husbands' immunity from marital rape charges. The claim of these essays is that if law would recognize the reality of its impact on women, it would better serve them. This approach ignores the unintended consequences of law and legal change, brilliantly captured in Mindie Lazarus-Black's recent work on "why women take men to magistrate's court" (Lazarus-Black 1994).

The standpoint feminist approach is represented by Peggy Antrobus's contribution to the *Gender* volume. She argues that bureaucratic "check-lists and guidelines, analytical frameworks and methodological tools are limited by the fact that they are situated within the dominant liberal paradigm and therefore never challenge the assumptions on which this particular model of development is based" (p. 52). Central to the problem is the misidentification of political problems as technical problems (p. 53). Gwendoline Williams's essay in the same volume provides an example of a challenge to the dominant development paradigm. She explores three development projects in which gender was introduced as a technical variable: a World Bank report, a CARICOM training program, and the Sou Sou land project in Trinidad. The latter project introduced a kind of settlement planning based on traditional forms of banking and credit-sharing; it was participatory, democratic, and decentralized, and, she argues, it "steer[ed]

away from the dichotomy between home and work," urban and rural, and public and private (p. 70). Frances Aparicio, in the *Daughters* volume, asks what happens when seemingly sexist salsa lyrics are interpreted by women and incorporated into women's narratives about sex and gender. The answer is a complex re-reading of salsa from Puerto Rican women's unique perspectives.

A. Lynn Bolles's book shares much with the approaches of feminist empiricism and standpoint feminism, but offers more. By tacking back and forth between women's life narratives and stories of their participation in the trade union movement, and the history of the movement itself, Bolles challenges a received historiography. She authorizes – or, rather, allows women trade union leaders to authorize – another narrative of Caribbean historical and economic development, one attentive to intensely personal struggles and to conflicts with families, husbands, and male union leaders. The portrait painted is different in tone and texture from that offered by other histories of trade unionism in the region; it is more nuanced, more human.

In contrast to Bolles's book, the two edited volumes suffer from editorial sloppiness; in my copy of the *Gender* book, for example, references are incomplete for several chapters and in Ffolkes's essay one entire page is repeated and the third section is missing. In *Daughters*, Verena Martinez-Alier becomes "Vera." And I make appearances in the same volume as "Maura" and "McMaurer."

But this last error causes me to question, much as Ruth Behar does in her evocative contribution to *Daughters*, the conditions of possibility of my own theorizing. As Behar writes, reflecting on her lifelong relationship with a former domestic servant who still nurtures her, "[d]aughters of Caliban stand tall only when the backs of their mothers stretch wide" (p. 119). Aihwa Ong, quoted by Bolles, puts a different spin on this sentiment, writing that "when feminists look overseas, they frequently seek to establish *their* authority on the backs of non-Western women" (Ong 1988:180, in Bolles, p. 11, emphasis in original). Bolles herself adds another layer: "What started as an 'easy book' for me (let the women do all the talking) has grown into a multileveled work" (p. 204). For me, what started as a hospital stay leads to difficult questions. What nurture have I received from the numerous and variously positioned "daughters of Caliban" who have facilitated my theorizing? How does the implicit First Worldism of my own critique erase that nurture? And in what ways are the theoretical concerns of the U.S. academy currently spreading around the globe, like the bad fast-food (McMaurer indeed) that can lead to sickness? Can the sickness "heat things up" enough to open new lines of

knowledge, new *konesans*, or merely cause mystical images of feverish dreams in a body out of balance?

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Lesser Antilles in the Age of European Expansion. ROBERT L. PAQUETTE & STANLEY L. ENGERMAN (eds.). Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996. xii + 383 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

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Students of the Lesser Antilles, who for years have had to view the main themes of the history of their sub-region through the prism of the mass of published material on Jamaica and the Greater Antilles, will welcome this valuable book. The editors have gathered together a refreshingly diverse series of articles covering the period of European and African contact with the indigenous peoples of the Leeward and Windward Islands, through to the emergence of an independent post-emancipation peasantry which was created by ex-slaves out of the social, economic, and agricultural remnants of the age of European expansion on these islands. There are eighteen articles, presented under five headings: "Europe and Indigenous Peoples"; "War and Imperial Rivalries"; "Migration, Trade, and the Transatlantic Economy"; "Slavery"; "Abolition and Emancipation."

Of particular interest are the three pieces analyzing the early contact period. This previously neglected area of Caribbean history has had to await the cross-disciplinary initiatives of archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians combining their research in a manner already well advanced in the Pacific over the last twenty years. William Keegan and Louis Allaire have cast their literary nets even wider in attempting to draw together the variety of preconceptions that seem to have contributed to Columbus's

identification of the people of the Lesser Antilles as Caribs. Keegan notes Columbus's reliance on European mythology and goes on to explore the ways in which the admiral freely combined this with "Taino mythology, and wishful thinking" (p. 19) in coming to his conclusions on the Caribs. He warns that modern investigators, by failing to distinguish myth and reality have, like Columbus, contributed to "the confusion surrounding who were the native peoples of the West Indies at the time of European contact" (p. 29). An accompanying map, entitled "Cultural geography of the West Indies in 1492," is however, somewhat perplexing, being nothing more than a map of modern boundaries superimposed with the short zig-zag of Columbus's first voyage.

Allaire attempts an analysis of contact from the Taino point of view, as it was these natives of Hispaniola who had informed Columbus of the presence of the "other" people to the east. By taking archaeological and mythological evidence into consideration, alongside the "hints" contained in documentary material produced by the religious ethnologist, Father Ramón Pané, as well as Las Casas and Columbus himself, Allaire draws an association between the people in the Lesser Antilles and the Caribs "entrenched on the mainland" at the time of contact, and concludes: "The simplest and best solution to the identity problem may be that *Caribes* meant little more than an islander from a distant land. Less clearly, *Caniba* or *Canima* and *Canibales* may reflect an association between these islanders and the militaristic and other bloody pursuits of distant enemies under the fearsome banner of the jaguar" (p. 46).

Reports of racial and cultural mixing in the Carib settlements date from the mid-sixteenth century and become increasingly numerous in the seventeenth. An intriguing collection of different nationalities was to be found in Carib villages on the Windward Islands during this period. They were Africans and various Europeans who according to contemporary reports either had been captured by the Caribs from neighboring islands and passing ships, or had escaped from slavery or indenture on plantations in Puerto Rico and later from French and British colonies on other islands. There were also survivors from shipwrecks or deserters in hiding. Kenneth Kiple and Kriemhild Ornelas look at the disease and demographics associated with this multiethnic encounter and come up with some interesting conclusions, but somewhat exaggerate the isolation of the Caribs in arguing their case as to the lesser effect which Old World diseases had upon them. Perhaps more gradual contact among the Caribs than in the case of the Tainos and the resulting development of immunity gave the racially mixed Caribs of the sixteenth century an advantage. It can be argued that the absorption of other ethnic groups into their kinship

system was a considered strategy among the Caribs as this seems to have been a continuation of the pattern active at the time of the first encounter when Carib men appear to have been taking wives from other groups and integrating men into their kinship network.

Michael Craton looks at the sociopolitical outcome of such mixture among the Black Caribs of St. Vincent and triangle of tensions and conflict between the British, Caribs, and French. He points out that the European perception of "peaceful" as opposed to "warlike" was also applied to "yellow Caribs" as opposed to "Black Caribs" in the same manner as had been done to Arawaks vs. Caribs since the time of Columbus. Although Craton makes good use of the published works of the two Sir William Youngs (senior and junior), a study of their unpublished papers would show how their perception of the Caribs, both "yellow" and "black," changed from the pioneer idealism of the father, even before his arrival in St. Vincent in the 1760s, to the bitter cynicism of the son in the 1790s and 1810s who was viewing events in hindsight. This pattern of hope and disillusionment in the space of forty years could be extended to reflect the general British attitude to all the "Ceded Islands" over that same period in matters of trade, politics, economics, and defense.

The fact that Andrew O'Shaughnessy's important study on "Redcoats and Slaves in the British Caribbean" relies so heavily on the Jamaican experience for its examples indicates the need for more work to be done on studying the particular complexities facing the European defense systems in the volcanic Caribbees. Elsewhere, the more familiar and well-established topics of sugar and slavery are effectively handled and are complemented by two incisive migration studies by Stanley Engerman and Alison Games respectively. The insight into Dutch trade and attitudes to Dutch slave emancipation, as well as the analysis of the influence of the French Revolution on the societies of Guadeloupe and Martinique, all provide a healthy counterbalance to the more Anglocentric material elsewhere and contribute to the well-rounded approach of the editors toward their selections. There is one little cultural bugbear of mine which has crept into this book: While we Commonwealth Caribbean "small islanders" are resigned to accept the Jamaica-centric view of the region as seen from outside, many of us have still not gotten accustomed to the temperate zone references to time, such as "in the spring of 1663" or "in the fall of 1789," when used by northern-based historians in the texts of their Caribbean studies. It may be a minor point, but it is an amusing, unconscious echo of the cultural dislocation evident in the initial encounter between people of the tropical and the temperate climes which is so well covered in this book.

Ethnicity in the Caribbean: Essays in Honor of Harry Hoetink. GERT OOSTINDIE (ed.). London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1996. xvi + 239 pp. (Paper £14.95)

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"[T]here are two kinds of scientists ... those who erect signposts twenty miles down the road ... and other, more cautious, scientists who come along in their wake, filling out the details, a centimeter at a time, inching their way towards the signposts" (Tobias 1994). This distinction was drawn in a commentary on the career of Raymond Dart, discoverer in 1924 of the "Taung child" (*Australopithecus africanus*). But in identifying Dart as the "signpost-erecting kind," the speaker could as well have been describing Harry Hoetink's contributions to Caribbean sociology. Among the crucial lessons of this scholar's prolific writings are the ideas that we talk of a generic slavery and a monolithic colonialism only at our own risk, and that we need to look at these institutions as varying cross-culturally and trans-historically. Hoetink has emphasized the hegemonic value of "whiteness" – aesthetically, politically, economically – in post-slavery, post-colonial societies, but demonstrated how this whiteness was an achieved, cultural construct, not a natural given. He has advocated a historical approach to understand *Dominicanos*, a Caribbean people too often deprived of historiography. And he has shown that the race and ethnic identity of particular individuals varies not only through time but also in space that when Caribbean people migrate, their identity often changes too, and that identity is the product of cultural ideology, not biology. To be sure, there are many facets of Hoetink's *oeuvre* that inspire contestation – scholars such as Ivar Oxaal (1969), for example, have questioned the utility of his concept of the "somatic norm image" for explaining relations between non-white colonized people – but controversy and debate are expectable in the legacy of any visionary scholar.

Contributors to this deserving *Festschrift* include Michiel Baud, Colin Clarke, Franklin W. Knight, Anthony P. Maingot, Sidney W. Mintz, Richard M. Morse, Gert Oostindie, Richard Price, Sally Price, and Angel G. Quintero Rivera. Given the hundreds of years of research experience and the fertile imaginations represented here, one might expect original and solid cutting-edge scholarship, a transcendence of traditional research

questions surrounding the theme of ethnicity in the Caribbean, chapters that draw inspiration from Hoetink's work but contradict some of it, and indeed points of disagreement, acknowledged or implicit. The collection delivers all of this.

Every chapter is praiseworthy and deserves attention and discussion. Given the constraints of space, I mention just a few. In a gem of an essay, Baud probes the elite discourse of ethnicity and nationalism – called *hispanidad* – in the Dominican Republic, pointing out how it, like all such New World discourses, originated with the advent of modernity but in terms of its content harkened for the return of “traditional” society, thus obscuring its origins as such. Tracing the contours of the Dominican variant through the writing of such ideologists as Manuel Arturo Peña Battle and Joaquín Balaguer, he argues that elite discourse does not always translate into mass activity and shows how weak popular anti-Haitianism can be in practice due to the numerous cross-border ties of social and economic exchange – ties that coexist with anti-Haitian and anti-black ideology (see Martínez 1997).

The Prices explore the commoditization of folklore in Martinique, showing how it is intimately tied to France's program of *francisation* for its overseas *départements*. In their role as interlocutors between avant-garde anthropological theorizing and the stagnant and dependent social science that has often characterized Caribbean studies, they compare the Martiniquan presentation of “traditional culture” to the rather different solutions arrived at by museum planners in French Guiana and Belize.

Maingot's essay presents an interesting problematic, looking at the lessons that Caribbean elites derived from the Haitian Revolution and reflecting on the absence, nearly two centuries later, of a “terrified consciousness” among the white minorities of the English-speaking Caribbean now that blacks have achieved political power there. He shows how, to the extent that this exists, it is counter-intuitive, in terms of the historical development of these communities and, perhaps for some, the imperial power's cultural values.

Knight takes the long historical view when discussing race and ethnic relations in contemporary Cuba, displaying his command of the Cuban materials in a piece that parallels in many ways, and receives independent support from, other recent scholarship on the subject (e.g., de la Fuente 1995).

Mintz again calls for “systadial” (“same stage”), rather than “synchronic” (“same time”), historical interpretations of the plantation complex and its effect on race and ethnic relations, arguing (p. 48) that “the layering of ethnic communities can best be seen as sequential

(chronological, diachronic) in terms of the region as a whole, but consisting in substantial measure of long-term, *local* group responses to the changing character of the plantation, and its fit within competing imperial systems.”

Oostindie contributes a fine study of Antillean and Suriname migration to the Netherlands, the mutual influences on the sending and receiving societies, and the constructions of ethnic and national identity. He analyzes how these fare when they travel, demonstrating that we can no longer ignore the implications of transnationalism and all that such a concept implies, or could imply, for our theorizing.

Our understanding of the world grows through a combination of signpost-erecting scholarship and the follow-up, which refines the insights and works out the details. The contributors to *Ethnicity in the Caribbean*, inspired and challenged by the paths Hoetink has cleared in Caribbean research, successfully expand the boundaries of scholarship charted in the work of the modern Dutch master.

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Across the Dark Waters: Ethnicity and Indian Identity in the Caribbean. DAVID DABYDEEN & BRINSLEY SAMAROO (eds.). London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1996. xi + 222 pp. (Paper £14.95)

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This volume is a useful addition to the burgeoning body of work on Caribbean peoples of South Asian descent. Although the preface states that the collection "reflects the work of a new generation of scholars" (p. iii), the contributors all have at least a decade of experience with their respective subject matter; indeed, several have laid much of the groundwork for Indo-Caribbean research.

The volume is divided into four sections. In Part I, "Race Relations," Malcolm Cross, Ralph Premdas, and Verene Shepherd analyze the foundations of the historical antinomy between Indo and Afro populations. Cross builds on Walter Rodney's analysis of the "racial contradiction" (p. 14) between Indo and Afro workers, arguing that by differentially weighing the factors Rodney posited, a more precise grasp and comparison of rivalries are possible. He concludes that material conditions (land availability, overall social and economic situation) and the ideology of their governance (planter policies and attitudes) are more powerful explanations of conflict than are demographic and cultural differences. Premdas explores the political developments leading to the "covert contempt and deceptive distrust" (p. 39) between Indo and Afro in Guyana. He traces Guyana's current problems to the rise of nationalism and communalism (under the shadow of colonial rule) and to political leaders' "narrow, selfish ends" of "personal ambition" (p. 62). Shepherd examines indenture in Jamaica, focusing on two of its most significant dimensions: ideals versus reality regarding the alleged manageability of Indian workers, and Christian missionary predictions of Indo-Afro conflict. Contrary to stereotypes of docility, Indian acts of protest demonstrated vigorous resistance to oppression, while missionary fears remained unfounded.

Part II concerns religious and cultural practices. Noorkumar Mahabir and Ashram Maharaj consider the influence of Hinduism on Trinidad's Orisha religion, describing examples of ritual and cosmology common to the two. Framing their discussion in terms of acculturation processes, the authors posit that these shared aspects should be seen as "parallel" traditions rather than in terms of "open borrowing" (p. 97). Steven Vertovec contends that although Caribbean Hinduism has produced a "standard and institutionalized orthodoxy" (p. 108), the conventional model of Great Tradition/Little Tradition does not adequately reflect Caribbean Hindu realities. Instead, these should be seen in terms of a distinction between "official" and "popular" Hinduism, which address the various strands or "levels" of Hinduism in the Caribbean. Peter van der Veer brings the Dutch Caribbean into view in his analysis of Suriname Hindu ritual in the Netherlands. Critical to identity construction in

diaspora, rituals underscore certain aspects of Hindu identity according to context, while they simultaneously emphasize correct performance. A major cultural problem results: establishing religious authority and cultural authenticity in diverse settings. One important response among Suriname Hindus is mediating these tensions by amplifying the role of priests in ritual performance.

Part III consists of a biography of Cheddi Jagan by Frank Birbalsingh. Jagan's written work is distinguished, Birbalsingh suggests, in being an eye-witness account of critical local and international events that reflect a Third World perspective. Placing the work in context and highlighting principal themes, he concludes that Jagan's "selfless devotion" and "high-minded principle" (p. 160) enabled him to attempt goals of democracy for Guyana.

Early history is the subject of Part IV, with chapters by Basdeo Mangru, Marianne Ramesar, and Brinsely Samaroo. Mangru writes about the policy of the Indian government toward indenture in the Caribbean, particularly regarding protection of Indian nationals overseas and eventual changes in emigration laws. Generally laissez-faire with occasional intervention, the Indian government tended to bow to planter interests. Mangru argues that, ironically, it ultimately rallied against indenture largely through the pressures of image: being admitted into fellowship with the rest of the British Empire as enlightened moderns. Repatriations are the subject of Ramesar's chapter. Framed by the first-hand account of Linton Gibbon, an Irish Trinidadian who sailed to India with repatriates around 1902, she provides a detailed description of return migration. Included are fascinating particulars about the voyage, personnel and activity on board, arrival in Calcutta, and some of the disappointments of return. Samaroo offers a historical sketch of the Muslim presence in Trinidad, focusing on those aspects of Islam that would later be key in the unfolding experience of both Muslims and Hindus there. Having in common the specter of colonial oppression, Indo-Trinidadian Muslims and Hindus simultaneously saw their interests in common yet sought to meet their specific needs in distinctive ways.

In their introduction the editors tell us that the papers derive mainly from two conferences on East Indians in the Caribbean, held in 1988 at the University of Warwick and York University. Other papers were commissioned to give a "pan-Caribbean flavour" (p. 6). To their credit, the editors concede the gender imbalance of the volume, even as gender studies are identified as "the most under-researched aspect of the East Indian presence" (p. 10). However, although "the historiography is dominated by men, as [their] own book reveals" (p. 10), over the past few

years scholarship has grown considerably with respect to women and gender in the Indo-Caribbean (both published and doctoral/master's theses) – undertaken by both female and male researchers. That eight out of the ten chapters were written by men, and that none of the subjects addressed specifically includes consideration of gender or women, is perhaps explained by the date of the conferences originally hosting these papers. Surely, further volumes of this kind will not only concede, but rectify.

Meeting its goal of regional coverage of some of the most significant political and social dimensions of Indo-Caribbean experience and written in very readable prose, this volume will be effective for introductory courses on the Indo-Caribbean and South Asian diasporas. Moreover, its numerous tables make a convenient reference text.

Ethnic Conflict and Development: The Case of Guyana. RALPH R. PREMDAS. Brookfield VT: Ashgate, 1995. xi + 205 pp. (Cloth US\$ 76.95)

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This single authored text provides insight into the multi-ethnic context of Guyana, and its political consequences, with particular emphasis on the 1950s and 1960s, although there is a very short postscript on the 1992 elections.

The book is divided into three parts. In the introduction, "Ethnicity and Development," Premdas claims the text will provide "empirical evidence and ... generate some theoretical insights into the behaviour of the ethnic factor in the developmental experience of one Third World country" (p. 3). He argues that the ethnic factor at play in Guyana has made development almost impossible and has severely impoverished the nation. "The Guyana Case" describes the historical colonial construction of the multi-ethnic territory of British Guiana, a legacy which the independent state of Guyana inevitably inherited. The rise of communal identities is clearly described, providing a context for the three chapters on the "fateful fall into the spiral of ethnic politics" and the roles of party organization, of elections and political campaigns, and of voluntary associations and pressure groups. The remaining three chapters in this part consider the "civil

war,” rigged elections, communal repression, ethnic domination, and elite cross-communal domination. “Ethnicity and Development” includes three chapters which consider the political, socio-cultural, psychological, and economic dimensions; the final chapter attempts a diagnosis and prescription.

The positive element of this book is that it provides a description and some level of discussion of a particular political context within which ethnicity has played a central role. I also agree with Premdas’s argument that ethnicity has been a neglected factor in development and that consequently ethnic conflict has in many cases “devastated all those promising plans for change” (p. 2). The book provides a partial understanding of the Guyanese situation – partial because it neatly excludes a significant ethnic group, the Amerindian populations of the interior which constitute 7 percent of the total population (Colchester 1996), claiming that they generally “remain outside the mainstream of Guyanese life” (p. 16). Premdas outrageously states that the Amerindians “isolated in reservations ... appeared to have accepted their economic lot contentedly” (p. 29). Even a cursory reading of work on the Guyanese Amerindians would have shown him that contentment was very far from their reality. While his attention is clearly the coastal population of Guyana I find his justification for excluding the Amerindians weak.

Ethnic Conflict and Development was published in 1995 and yet has only three published references from the 1990s. This is despite the fact that many additions to the literature on ethnicity appeared in the 1980s and 1990s. Consequently, Premdas’s analysis is highly dated. The definitions of ethnicity provided in the introduction are also problematic; Premdas verges on essentialism at several points when he discusses the “primordial” instincts of ethnic identity (pp. 5-6). Most of the book’s references to work on political and economic structures are from the 1960s, and political theory has shifted considerably since then. Moreover, it perpetuates some lamentable generalizations and stereotypes, such as the assertion that “the social structure of the typical Third World country is multi-ethnic” (p. 1). What is the typical Third World? What of First World multi-ethnic social structures? Then later, “the Guyanese ... became a twisted, paranoid people” and “weak personalities ... have come to typify the Guyanese citizen” (p. 164). In an academic text on the damage that a retreat to ethnic essentialism creates such generalizations and stereotypes are appalling. I found the repetition of the supposed stereotypes the African (male) holds of the Indian (male), and vice versa, on pages 24-25, and then again on pages 75-76, unnecessary. In lots of ways the text

perpetuates stereotyping and hence actively contributes to the very process of differentiation which it criticizes

The text is full of contradictions. At the beginning of the book Premdas claims that all multi-ethnic states are alike, but by page 182 he is stressing that they are not. In a chapter entitled "The Economic Dimension," he repeatedly states how inaccurate and unreliable statistical data are, and yet much of his analysis throughout the text is based on such data. Premdas mentions his own research on several occasions but he neither presents his methodology nor positions himself in relation to the research or the text.

The emphasis on ethnicity as an explanatory factor means that other important aspects of the Guyanese situation are under-analyzed. The role of external nations is poorly investigated. On page 43 we learn that British warships evicted the PPP from power but we are not told why. It is as though it is an incidental factor, when in fact it was fundamentally important in the ending of the Jagan-Burnham co-operation. The role of international actors is only raised again on page 195 for a single paragraph. The subject matter deserves a much more nuanced analysis of the complex web of factors at play in the Guyanese situation which is clearly a case of economics, political philosophy, colonial and foreign relations combining with ethnicity. The United States and the United Kingdom did not act against Jagan because he was Indian, but rather out of political, ideological, and economic motives.

In short, the text is flawed on many levels. It is repetitious and appears to be a series of disconnected essays. The lack of comparative understandings from other places, indeed even within the Caribbean region, notably Trinidad, is a lost opportunity. I fear that the book has done little to improve our contemporary understandings of the complexities surrounding ethnicity and will not effectively convince those involved in development to consider ethnic factors. Fortunately, there are other texts which will achieve this.

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COLCHESTER, MARCUS, 1997. *Guyana: Fragile Frontier: Loggers, Miners and Forest Peoples*. London: Latin American Bureau.

A History of East Indian Resistance on the Guyana Sugar Estates, 1869-1948. BASDEO MANGRU. Lewiston NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1996. xiv + 370 pp. (Cloth US\$ 99.95)

"Tiger in the Stars": The Anatomy of Indian Achievement in British Guiana 1919-29. CLEM SEECHARAN. London: Macmillan, 1997. xxviii + 401 pp. (Paper £14.95)

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On May 5, 1838 the *Whitby* and *Hesperus* docked in British Guiana carrying 396 contract laborers – the first East Indian immigrants to arrive in the Caribbean. Between 1838 and 1917 a total of 238,909 migrants entered this colony. Even though these indentureds were supposed to return to their home country after their contract had expired, the great majority settled in the colony and soon formed an appreciable part of the population. By now the historiography on indentured immigration in British Guiana is rather impressive; one of the most prolific authors on the subject is Basdeo Mangru. His latest book goes beyond contract labor and includes the first three decades after the abolition of indentureship. In his history of East Indian resistance he sets out to dispell the myth that Indians were "a docile, conservative people reluctant or incapable of initiating action to disrupt the status quo" (p. xi). Mangru focuses on the physical resistance among sugar workers against economic exploitation, their social marginality, and their dehumanization in the indenture and postindenture period. He argues that the Indians in British Guiana were "in the vanguard for political reforms and the most ardent critics of British colonial domination" (p. xi).

Clem Seecharan's *Tiger in the Stars* concentrates on the decade from 1919 to 1929, and approaches the experience of the East Indians in British Guiana from a different angle. He calls the 1920s the most important decade for the Indian community in British Guiana. The main obstacle to the development of a stable community, the shortage of women, had been virtually removed, and by the late 1920s approximately 80 percent of the Indians who lived in British Guiana had been born there. It was the time when a middle class, based on agriculture and commerce, emerged and a sense of a comprehensive Indian identity became evident. Seecharan proudly documents the cultural, economic, and social achievements of the

Indians. His focus is the joint-family which through thrift, industry, and a family division of labor managed to survive in an often inhospitable environment. He also emphasizes that Indian culture in British Guiana was shaped by a resurgence of pride in the history and traditions of ancient India and the rise of Ghandi.

Thus the perspectives of these two authors on the history of East Indians are quite different and this may be illustrated by comparing their discussion of a significant event in the history of early twentieth-century British Guiana. On April 3, 1924, the colonial police opened fire at plantation Ruimveldt on striking sugar workers as they tried to march to Georgetown. Twelve Indians and one black were killed. Surprisingly, it is Seecharan who goes into most detail in describing and analyzing the Ruimveldt killings. Whereas Mangru's brief account of the killings stresses economic reasons for the strike and concludes that its significance was that it forged a temporary unity between Indians and blacks and that for the first time identifiable leaders emerged, Seecharan raises major questions regarding motives, African-Indian unity, and the leadership in this protest. Seecharan's description hinges on the importance of the so-called Colonisation Scheme, a planters' proposal to renew Indian immigration after the abolition of indenture. Not only was the black population against this plan out of fear of an Indian majority in the colony, but one of the major Indian leaders, Francis Kawal, also opposed it as he was afraid that immigration would lower wages on the plantations and would be detrimental to the welfare of the Indians. Kawal was a prominent merchant and head of the British Guiana East Indian Association (BGEIA) and the main channel for ventilating Indian grievances. Mangru states that Kawal opposed the Colonisation Scheme because of the economic and moral deterioration – including dire poverty, sexual immorality, and intemperance – of Indians. According to Seecharan, Kawal should have taken a longer view in order to establish Indian political influence and he should have transformed the BGEIA into a trade union in the 1920s when the climate was conducive to do so. Seecharan argues that because Kawal was ineffective and the influence of the Emigration Agent General was dwindling rapidly in these years, there actually existed a leadership vacuum among the Indians. Seecharan also challenges the notion that there existed African-Indian unity. "It is wrong to see the unusual presence of Blacks at Ruimveldt as a manifestation of racial unity. It was a perverse union, fed primarily by Black opposition to renewed Indian immigration and fear of Indian domination in the long-run, rather than by working-class grievances against the plantocracy" (p. 126). He concludes

that the Ruimveldt killings strengthened Indian fears of the motives of black leaders.

Mangru sees the history of the East Indians as rooted in bondage, violence, exploitation, and human degradation and gives a straightforward account of almost eighty years of physical resistance to the plantation system by sugar workers. He neglects the other side of the coin, i.e. covert, day-to-day resistance and cultural resilience, probably the most enduring form of resistance against the plantation regime. I think Mangru has done so on purpose because of his desire to demolish the "docile coolie myth," but why this urge, one might ask. In recent publications on Asian resistance in the Caribbean this myth has already been thoroughly discredited. Mangru's book would have gained in significance if he had included other forms of resistance and had put his findings in a broader context.

Seecharan does not neglect the often harsh lives of the sugar workers but emphasizes the socioeconomic progress of the immigrants. The link between the introduction of cattle and rice and economic advancement are obvious throughout the study. Seecharan spends many a page berating those individuals who according to him formed an obstacle to the ascent of the Indians. Francis Kawal was one such person, but his *bête noire* was Governor Wilfred Collet. Seecharan argues that Collet crippled the rice industry by instituting price controls and an export embargo.

Seecharan accentuates the positive sides of indenture by pointing at the initiative and enterprise of those who left India. He argues that indenture-ship created a new Indian personality, without the "stultifying excrescences of the old Indian order" (p. 40) and that despite the harshness of life on the plantations, the estates served "as a nursery for the adaptation of Indian culture, and the development of attitudes and skills which proved invaluable when Indians settled in the villages" (p. 102). The rise of the Indian middle class was a painful process because of the ambivalence in the Indian community and the jealousy in colonial society in general. Exactly how these Indians made their way up the economic ladder is less clear. The author gives examples of men who became extremely rich, but does not explore how they amassed their starting capital, besides being thrifty. The role of women is another aspect that deserves more attention. The importance of their role as producers, housekeepers, and mothers of often large families is obvious, but Seecharan is less explicit about the position of women in the family. He alludes to their assertiveness, but on the same page writes that daughters-in-law were usually assigned to do certain things (p. 210) and later that "the authority of the paterfamilias was sustained" (p. 355). Finally, I think Mangru would

disagree with Secharan's contention that the emergence of a small, urban, Indian middle class "marked the beginning of an embryonic political awareness" (p. 253). Even though Secharan has a point when he states that racism and discrimination helped to blur class divisions in the Indian community, the relationship between the emerging Indian middle classes and the (sugar) workers calls for more research. Until that is done, these two complementary books give a fine insight into the Indian community in British Guiana in the first half of the twentieth century.

The Rise of Westindian Cricket: From Colony to Nation. FRANK BIRBALSINGH. St. John's, Antigua: Hansib Publishing (Caribbean), 1996. 274 pp. (Paper £12.95)

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Even in their present playing doldrums, the West Indies (here Westindies) invoke admiration, inspiration, awe, and sometimes fear throughout the cricket-playing world. From the late 1970s until the early 1990s they were undisputed world champions. Now, to their supporters at home and away, they are champions in waiting as a new generation of players finds its place.

For that reason alone, any new book on the Caribbean game is welcomed by fans and social analysts alike. As in Caribbean rumshops and elsewhere, the game and its players and its "moments" are the stuff of discussion, even legend within the band of followers. The cover picture here says it all: the imperious Garry (Sir Garfield) Sobers (partnered by the magnificent Rohan Kanhai) strides confidently towards the wicket, shirt buttoned but not much above the navel, collar turned up, camera fixed in arrogant glare – West Indies in the cricket ascendant if in no other social realm. This is the source of mythology.

In many respects, however, this book's time has passed as has Sobers's playing career, because, unlike most other sports, Caribbean cricket now has an excellent analytical literature to befit its social context, and not all that literature is referenced here.

Birbalsingh himself notes his central argument to be that playing

performances may be "related to divisions and difficulties which the West-indian team inherited from their social history" (p. 254). Like all of us interested in the field he pays homage to C.L.R. James whose status now as a scholar, analyst, and sage is, if anything, greater than before his death a few years ago. Consequently, the codings of class, caste, color, education, and the rest are remarked upon here.

Yet there is no real moving forward. Perhaps the best demonstration of that proceeds from notice of an omission. While James is the undisputed source of analysis, Orlando Patterson caught the dilemma most succinctly – cricket as the game West Indians (black men dressed in white clothes) should hate but, paradoxically, love the most. Birbalsingh does not cite Patterson, but the book reflects the dilemma.

The first half traces West Indies test cricket (history) from 1928 to 1966, and is divided into eras identified with players. Much of this replays match accounts elsewhere, and the purpose is not always clear. The description of the infamous 1954 Bourda test against England (pp. 85-86) is a case in point.

After Sobers, the book turns away from the history, and that is puzzling. While "Sobers is de King" (Chapter 6) might be a satisfying emotional highpoint, the pinnacle of success was rather with the later Clive Lloyd era. Inexplicably, though, Lloyd scarcely appears anywhere. Instead, Birbalsingh turns to some brief and eclectic player biographies, and there will always be an argument over who should be "in" and "out."

What is curious, though, is that the sketches frequently do not make the most of the opportunities offered for social comment. That on the wonderful Weekes, for example (pp. 168-69), mentions not at all the huge odds Everton overcame to reach, let alone star in, international cricket. Rather, his playing success is the focus, a perfect illustration of Patterson's point.

As befits a professor of English, Birbalsingh's best chapters (8 and 9) are on writers (though again, some will find his choice of subjects eclectic). His commentaries on V.S. Naipaul and Edward Kamau Brathwaite in relation to cricket are excellent. Indeed, that on Brathwaite's poem "Rites" is probably the best section in the book, drawing out the richness of cricket's place in the folk culture.

Overall, however, the book recognizes the sources of Caribbean cricket complexity, then takes the romantic escape into the playing superstructure rather than the social base. In that sense, it is very different from the analytical works collected and edited by Beckles and Stoddart (1995).

This review was written on the island of Redang, in Malaysia, overlooking a beach reminiscent of many in the cricket-playing Caribbean.

One thing was missing on the white sand against the blue water – beach cricket. Neither Brathwaite nor Patterson could have written their analyses there, a powerful reminder of how much there is yet to learn.

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Trinidad Carnival: A Quest for National Identity. PETER VAN KONINGSBRUGGEN. London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1997. ix + 293 pp. (Paper £14.95)

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Years ago Dan Sperber (1985:34) suggested that anthropology be broken into two parts: an interpretative ethnography written by an anthropologist and based on field experiences, and a theoretical study written by a theoretician to explain cultural representations and based on interpretive ethnographies. *Trinidad Carnival* falls mostly into the second category in that it is a theoretical study based largely on the primary research done by others. A better title for the book would have been "A Theoretical Discussion of Class and Creole Values in Trinidad as Expressed in Carnival." Van Koningsbruggen bases his study on ethnohistorical research and ethnography conducted by others, on his own interpretive fieldwork carried out in the 1980s, and on contemporary interpretations by a variety of commentators. He never quite tells us what carnival was and is, but muses about what carnival means – sometimes in elegant fashion by bringing together many of the leading commentators on the subject, and sometimes in tabloid fashion when he ponders the nocturnal danger in Port of Spain's Savannah, venue for some of the most important carnival productions. Without giving statistics or other proof he says that the Savannah "is ... the stamping ground of thieves and rapists" (p. 148).

Van Koningsbruggen writes "I regard the Trinidad carnival today as a dramatic and symbolic reflection of dominant values and counter-values in society" (p. 267). For him, Trinidad carnival "is a complex product

wrought by two centuries of history in which it has successively undergone the cultural and ideological influences of the white planter elite, the black lower class, and the Creole middle class" (p. 268). Carnival projects visions of national identity, illusions that are contested by various classes and ethnic groups within the island's complex social structure. Although Van Koningsbruggen uses a social anthropological approach, he notes that one can never dismiss carnival's history since old issues may emerge again in new clothes.

Chapter 1 ("The History of the Trinidad Carnival in the Nineteenth Century"), Chapter 2 ("The Development of the *Jamet* [lower class] Carnival into a National Festival"), and Chapter 3 ("The Social and Political Significance of the Creole Middle Class and its Increasing Intervention in the 'Black Bacchanal'") are based on several studies, especially Errol Hill's pioneering work on Trinidad carnival (1972). But that book is several decades old (and is in the process of being revised). Van Koningsbruggen refers to John Cowley's important study on nineteenth-century carnival (1996), but he hardly makes use of it. It is a pity since a close reading of this ethnohistorical work could have helped him to update his data on the history of carnival.

In the rest of the book Van Koningsbruggen steps up his ruminations. Chapter 4 is "Contemporary Trinidad, Stage of the Greatest Show on Earth." Chapter 5 is titled after Peter Wilson's old saw, "Reputation versus Respectability," and draws from both Wilson's ideas (1973) and Roger Abrahams's critique (1979) of those ideas. Value distinctions are not as simple as Wilson supposes. Trinidad is full of divisions with no single value system or group dominating. Trinidadians have a perceived need to keep their cultural diversity in the face of internal and external forces to change. That is, they need to have cultural pluralism but they also need to keep their society together. Chapter 6 is "The Dynamic Interplay of Conflicting Orientations: Between Miami and Africa," which takes up the issues of perceived African heritage, so-called narcissism, and identification with consumer-oriented North America. Chapter 7 is "The Spirit of Canboulay: The Socio-cultural Autonomy of Carnival." In it Van Koningsbruggen contrasts differential class involvement in various aspects of carnival. The last chapter is "Carnival as a Vehicle in the Quest for National Identity." Too bad Steve Stuempfle's study of the steelband is too recent (1995). Stuempfle (1995:235) articulates a hypothesis similar to Van Koningsbruggen's, except that he restricts his assessment of carnival to steelband: the growth of the steelband parallels the growing sense by Creoles of a national identity.

Van Koningsbruggen is rightly troubled by the hypocrisy expressed

between the oft-stated local ideal that Trinidad and Tobago is a racial paradise and the reality of racism on the island. He expects Trinidadians to be different from the Dutch, the North Americans, or the South Africans. The fact that he expects to experience the ideal in Trinidad and is let down by reality suggests either that he places Trinidadians on a higher moral plain concerning racial tolerance (where they, like other countries, want to be) or that he is overly critical. In a section on Trinidad's perceived "paranoia" concerning tourists (Peter O'Connor quoted in Van Koningsbruggen) and after recounting a local newspaper report about a racial encounter white tourists had with a non-white street vendor, Van Koningsbruggen writes: "Nor will tourists feel at ease if they experience what I have experienced on various occasions in the busy shopping streets in the centre or in Queen's Park Savannah, where someone hisses as you pass by: 'Go home you fucking whitey!' or words to that effect" (p. 221). These uncalled-for remarks could not have been uttered by sidewalk critics of his book; it hadn't been published yet. It may be that Van Koningsbruggen is superficially equating racial remarks in various cultural settings that may not be equivalent. An anti-white slur in bombastic Trinidad may not mean the same as a ditto slur rendered in New York City.

In spite of my critical comments, this book is a valuable addition to carnival studies. Its major asset is that it brings together in the form of a lively commentary the major theories of West Indian social relations and then applies those theories to Trinidad carnival. No one has quite attempted such a fulsome theoretical study of the subject as this and for that attempt alone Van Koningsbruggen is to be congratulated.

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Carnival, Canboulay and Calypso: Traditions in the Making. JOHN COWLEY. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. xv + 293 pp. (Cloth £35.00, US\$ 49.95)

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In *The Middle Passage* (1982:29) V.S. Naipaul writes, "History is built around achievement and creation, and nothing was created in the West Indies." Such a harsh judgment about this part of the world marks the author's earliest works. Calling the West Indians a people without history is rather strong wording, but it does not appear out of the blue. Trained academic scholars on the Caribbean often reach the same conclusion in their research, although a critical position and a refined cautiousness keep them from the sweeping statements which are the privilege of a literary author. Though in historical perspective Naipaul's statement has an element of truth in it, a pronounced disdain for certain cultural expressions in the Caribbean area, based on his personal taste, plays a part in his judgment as well. For example, when he was interviewed by a Dutch newspaper during a short stay in Trinidad in 1991, he displayed his aversion to steelband music: "You see, the noise never stops. It's torture to me, but they like it here. They don't work with the mind." A rather blunt remark about a unique style of music, evolved out of an equally unique carnival with, by Caribbean standards, a long history of about two hundred years. His eurocentric view of history and of the meaning of creation apparently makes him blind to culture and art from the Caribbean itself. Walcott seems to be reacting to Naipaul when he states, "In the Caribbean history is irrelevant, not because it is not being created, or because it was sordid, but because it has never mattered. What has mattered is the loss of history, the amnesia of the races, what has become necessary is imagination, imagination as necessity, as invention" ([Trinidad] *Daily Express*, 10 February 1988). In my opinion, invention is meant in the sense of *traditions in the making*, as in the subtitle of *Carnival, Canboulay and Calypso*. In this book, John Cowley has written about the process of two centuries of "imagination building."

Starting in the days of slavery and following through to the first decades of the twentieth century, Cowley's book traces the evolution of carnival and secular black music in Trinidad and the links that existed with other territories and beyond. Until the early nineteenth century, the

festival (and its music) bore a mainly European character. The Catholic, French-Creole planter elite celebrated their carnival in the seclusion of their own gardens and houses. But after the abolition of slavery in 1834 the ex-slaves took carnival over from the whites in the streets of the capital Port of Spain. It developed quickly into a festival with sexual and violent aspects, which were not tolerable to the establishment. The government's attempts at putting an end to the peace-breaching festivities reached a climax with the uprisings of 1881-84. Certain aspects of the popular demonstrations disappeared as a result of the measures taken, and around the turn of the century, groups from the upper classes reluctantly began to participate in the street festivals again. Slowly, the contours of a popular festival emerged, and they developed into the carnival as we know it today. This process was mainly given direction by people from the lower classes of African and Creole origin. The restrictions proclaimed by the government, such as the bans on African drums and on stick-fighting, stimulated the people's imagination. They created new forms and alternatives to satisfy the original need for cultural expression. Calypso, which emerged as the pre-eminent carnival song from the end of the nineteenth century, and its association with the festival are investigated in Cowley's book, as are the first commercial recordings by Trinidad performers. Great use is made of contemporary newspaper reports, colonial documents, travelogues, oral history, and folklore. The result is a clear but meticulous picture of carnival and black music history in Trinidad.

Indeed, the quality of the book is to be found in the conscientious way in which Cowley follows the developments from the end of the eighteenth century until 1920, not making it clear why he ends history at that arbitrary point. To a certain extent the book derives its strength from a consistent descriptive approach to these traditions in the making. Numerous citations from original sources enliven the story. At the same time, the author's frequent allusions to moral disapproval of carnival and black music and public demand for measures to be taken in the comments from the bourgeoisie tend to have the opposite effect: a rather tedious recital of recurring facts: "the shameful violation of the Sabbath by the lower order of the population"; "disgusting and indecent scenes"; "near nudity"; "yelling of a savage Guinea song"; "fierce blasts on the *carnet-à-piston*, or some equally diabolical instrument"; "obscene songs and lewd dances"; "As for the dancing, it is nothing but the most disgusting obscenity pure and simple, being an imitation more or less vigorous and lustful by the male and female performers of the motions of the respective sexes whilst in the act of coition"; etc.

I have no objection to a descriptive approach, since it often offers a

refreshing interlude in the flood of theoretical discourses that social scientists are supposed to get through these days. However, while reading Cowley's book I became aware of a growing desire for reflection on the material presented, and for some structuring explanations that would make it easier for the reader to detect the meaning of the story. For instance, we can observe a trend in the history of the festival which is in line with the three stages proposed by Menezes (1982) through which popular culture has to pass before it can become a generally accepted or dominant culture: *rejection*, *domestication*, and *recuperation*. This model may have its analytical uses, especially because, as I have argued elsewhere, the cultural reality of the festival situation in Trinidad diverges from it on a number of essential points (Van Koningsbruggen 1997:2-4).

Without denying the importance of a descriptive historical and (partly) discographic approach, I believe the story would have gained depth and structure if Cowley had introduced a modest number of anthropological or sociological theories. This should tempt one to meaningful comparison with similar histories of popular culture. The book under review stays floating in the air, since the author has nothing more to say on the development of carnival in Trinidad during the last eight decades, while the flourishing of the three most important manifestations of the festival – calypso music, steelband, and masquerade – stem from this period and form the pillars of today's national *Bacchanal*.

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The Parish Behind God's Back: The Changing Culture of Rural Barbados. GEORGE GMELCH & SHARON BOHN GMELCH. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997. xii + 240 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.50, Paper US\$ 19.95)

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This book explores the village world of St. Lucy, Barbados – a relatively remote parish about twenty miles north of Bridgetown, the capital. The Gmelches, cultural anthropologists at Union College, New York, have taken U.S. students to live in St. Lucy households for summer fieldwork since 1983. The book, which incorporates many student observations, provides “a contemporary ethnographic portrait of rural Barbados today and its connections to the outside world” (p. x) and is written with students in mind. It is easy to read, and represents a useful addition to Caribbean literature.

In Chapter 1 we are introduced to the island of Barbados, and to the parish of St. Lucy. It is worth noting, as the authors do toward the end of the book, that Barbadians enjoy a relatively good quality of life, ranking twentieth in the world according to the United Nations human development index. An historical overview of English colonization in Barbados from 1627 follows in Chapter 2. The development of plantations, sugar, and slavery led to an economic and demographic revolution, with enslaved Africans producing sugar, molasses, and rum for distant markets in Europe and North America. Students are given a useful introduction to Barbados, the slave trade, slave revolts, and emancipation. The fact that Barbados has been integrated in the Atlantic economy for centuries is underlined, but we learn little specifically about the historical development of St. Lucy parish. The reader yearns for a contemporary map of St. Lucy, and its villages, that developed after slave emancipation on the periphery of plantation land.

Chapter 3, “From Sugar to Tourism,” examines the changing Barbadian economy, involving the decline of sugar production and the rise of tourism. Since the 1960s land in sugarcane has halved, and sugar production has dropped substantially. The number of small farmers growing cane for cash has decreased tenfold to about 2,800 people. The young in Barbados, most of whom have benefited from a well-developed educational system, shun agricultural work. By 1974 tourism superseded

sugar as the major earner of foreign exchange. Even though St. Lucy had no tourist hotels in 1994, 15 percent of employed parish adults worked in the tourist industry. Approximately 80 percent of villagers commute to work, which is a big change from a generation ago. Increasingly, people are employed in "off-shore" operations, including manufacturing and information processing. Still, many people in St. Lucy grow crops to sell and/or consume, and about one third of households raise animals, frequently as insurance against economic hardship. About 90 percent of householders own the land where they live, and land ownership continues to be a significant expression of freedom. Families combine working for cash and trying to maintain a degree of flexibility by engaging in agricultural pursuits. They mix pre-industrial and post-industrial lifestyles.

Next we are introduced to six village households in St. Lucy. What is striking is the variety of jobs, the occupational pluralism of individuals, and a willingness to work hard. Family structures include nuclear families, an extended family, and two households headed by single mothers. One family is headed by an emigrant, who worked in England and Canada before returning to St. Lucy parish with savings. An immigrant single mother from Guyana works hard to support her three children. This is a rich part of the book.

Gender and lifestyles are discussed in Chapter 5. Relations between the sexes are portrayed as antagonistic. Many men are suspicious of female material designs, and many women believe men are only interested in sex. The Gmelches found that North American female students were shocked by sexual banter encountered in the island, where fathering children is frequently viewed as a sign of manhood. St. Lucy approximates the Barbadian average with 44 percent of parish households headed by single women.

What has been the impact of modernization and economic development on the community? In the 1960s life became easier with the advent of piped water, followed by gas and electricity (although not every household has electricity in St. Lucy parish). But, in common with much of the rest of the world, community spirit has weakened, accompanied by increased materialism and individualism. Television is blamed for a declining sense of community, although churches (for females) and rum shops (for males) still bind people together.

A chapter on religion in St. Lucy parish, where about 75 percent of villagers claim a religious connection, is followed by the last chapter, entitled "The Global Village: Television, Tourism, and Travel." Culture from the United States bombards the island, threatening a distinctive Barbadian culture. Tourism affects most people in the island to some

degree, and the health of the economy seems tied to attracting more and more tourists. Emigration and travel have long characterized Barbadian lifestyles. In St. Lucy about 25 percent of households have children living abroad. As in most Caribbean islands remittances are important to the local economy of Barbados. Many emigrants return to Barbados, where they frequently become agents of change. The Gmelches conclude that community is less linked to village life than formerly. Barbadians, many with relatives living overseas, belong to geographically dispersed communities, rather than village communities.

The appendix, which discusses "lessons from the field," is worth commenting on because it emphasizes the importance of taking U.S. students abroad for study. By living in households in St. Lucy, U.S. students learned about their own culture from a different perspective. They began to question their assumptions, and, as most teachers appreciate, this is when real learning begins. Students were struck by the relatively slow pace of rural life and the lack of material possessions, and gained some understanding of living as a minority group. The book is an endorsement of well-planned, study-abroad programs.

The Parish Behind God's Back could, with profit, be used in conjunction with the 1990 Barbados census material. Robert B. Potter has recently produced an analysis (1996) of the census, in which he divides the Barbadian parishes into three groups according to socioeconomic and demographic traits. Zone 1, the southeastern parishes of St. Michael (including Bridgetown), Christ Church, and St. James, comprise an urban-suburban-tourist area, including enclave manufacturing, modern retail forms, and elite residential areas. Zone 2 includes St. Philip, St. George, and St. Thomas, all geographically close to Zone 1, and being drawn into the suburban ambit. Zone 3, the northeastern parishes, including St. Lucy, are more rural and tend to lag behind the rest of the island. Potter sees this as a continuation of inequality that he attributes to a "plantopolis-oriented pattern of settlement and economic activity" (p. 183) dating back to the mercantile period. Potter helps to place the Gmelches' study of St. Lucy parish in a geographical context.

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Narratives of Exile and Return. MARY CHAMBERLAIN. London: Macmillan, 1997. xii + 236 pp. (Paper £14.95)

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In just two decades (1951-71), 12 percent of the population of Barbados migrated to Britain, attracted largely by the promise of jobs. Although the migrants did not intend to stay away for good – most planned to be gone three to five years – their return seldom took place as early as expected. And many eventually sent for their children and/or partners and established permanent households in Britain. *Narratives of Exile and Return*, published in Warwick University's Caribbean Studies series, uses oral history to explore the lives and experiences of these migrants and their offspring. By looking at migrant families across two and three generations, Chamberlain aims to identify the role of the family in migration.

Following an introduction, the first two chapters nicely provide the historical context – a history of migration from the English-speaking Caribbean to Britain, with the focus on the post-World War II era. Chapter 3 uses case studies to explore the role, importance, and variety of family dynamics among the migrants. Too many names and details, however, sometimes make it difficult to follow the argument and discern what it all means. Chapter 4 looks at the responses of the migrants to their reception in Britain, while Chapter 5 deals with gender as “an explanatory tool and an organizing principle of narration and response.” Here, Chamberlain adeptly reveals gender differences in how migrants explain and recount their experiences. Men, for example, present their decision to migrate as an individual decision, not as a family choice; they emphasize impulse and autonomy in making their decision to migrate, and talk about occupation as the defining feature of their lives. In contrast, women incorporate family members when describing their decision to migrate. (Indeed, many went abroad in order to join partners who had gone ahead of them.) Women also discuss migration less casually, stressing the enormity of the move, often because they foresaw the potential for permanent absence from their homelands, and the emotional trauma of leaving children behind. In Chamberlain's words, women don't talk about “bravado and heroism, of building canals and finding oil – or setting up a tailor's shop, or rising to management in the Post Office” (p. 104).

Chapter 6 concludes the first half of the book with a look at the importance of the family in shaping the responses of the generation of Barbadians born or raised in Britain to those Barbadians who came earlier. The second half of the book – Chapters 7 through 11 – is a selection of five family narratives which the author hopes will reveal the “diversity, and similarity, of migrant families and their experience” (p. 136). These chapters are a sample of the raw material – though in an edited form – on which the analysis in the first half of the book is based.

Though the author’s concern is not with theories or models of migration, I found it curious that she neglected two recent books dealing with the same subject and methodology. Both my own *Double Passage: The Lives of Caribbean Migrants Abroad and Back Home* (1992) and John Western’s *Passage to England: Barbadian Londoners Speak of Home* (1992) also use oral history to look at Barbadian migration to Britain. These books appear in Chamberlain’s bibliography, but there is no mention of either in the text. If social science is to be cumulative, it must build upon the research that precedes it. There were numerous opportunities for Chamberlain to make comparisons; just to have noted the convergences would have strengthened her conclusions.

Like most titles in the Warwick Series, the book contains no illustrations. This is disappointing given the extensive collections of excellent photographs of West Indian migrants in England. A few images could have added life to the narratives, and made a sometimes dry text more appealing.

Overall, what *Narratives of Exile and Return* does best is to give expression to the voices of the migrants. And by looking at several generations of migrants within the same families, Chamberlain shows how the Caribbean domestic unit has become globalized. Cuba, Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica, Central America, the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom are all home to far-flung, transnational Barbadian families. Chamberlain’s scholarship is sound and the amount of research (including some eighty-five “life story” interviews) impressive, but her prose is sometimes annoyingly vague and difficult to follow. Consider, for example, the following: “First, the existence of a family dynamic, in this case, a migration dynamic which both determined behaviour and gave it meaning; second, the interplay between this migration dynamic and other family dynamics (such as colour), and family goals, (such as social mobility); third ...” (p. 9). Some of my difficulty with the prose may be due to disciplines (history versus anthropology) and cultures (English versus American style). Still, the manuscript would have benefited from a stern editor with an insistence on clarity.

Une ethnographie des conflits aux Antilles: Jalousie, commérages, sorcellerie. CHRISTIANE BOUGEROL. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1997. 161 pp. (Paper FF 128)

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This book brings together seven articles, four of which were previously published in specialized journals. An introduction and conclusion situate the various chapters in the context of ideas about conflictual social relations, medical and religious systems and their interaction, and the ethnography of Guadeloupe. The author, a specialist in traditional medicine in the French Antilles, explains how she moved from her initial interests, which were largely medical, toward a focus on the links between conflict and illness.

The ethnographic materials are based mainly on fieldwork conducted in Guadeloupe but are also applicable to the French Caribbean more generally. Bougerol advocates ethnography in a minor key, arguing that in this setting, where the classic concerns of ethnographers (kinship systems, foundational mythologies, etc.) are absent, it is attention to the way daily life is played out that allows us to grasp the specificity of Antillean culture. The researcher is thus compelled to focus on a microethnography of *voisinage*. One could argue, however, that this "absence" is exactly where a richness of meaning is to be found, unlocking the essence of these societies. Are we not, after all, looking at a different kind of coherence from that in a "well-structured" society? In other words, what is it that ties together the most banal gossip or a quarrel between neighbors and the world of spirits and the dead, always via intermediaries such as therapists, healers, or sorcerers? The task, which Bougerol accepts, is to understand the process that converts a casual criticism into a charge of sorcery, pulling in social and religious conflict, and involving culturally defined roles such as the jealous person, the hypocrite, the gossip monger, the healer, and the sorcerer.

In terms of methodology, Bougerol draws on the interactional approach of Erving Goffman, developed in France by Louis Quéré. In her view, this method, based on a logic of reciprocal actions, is particularly well suited to the analysis of conflict in a creole society. I would argue that while it does shed light on the context in which conflicts appear, it offers little help in interpreting the phenomena in question or understanding their coherence

as a system. Rather, it would seem essential in studying creole societies (even in a psycho-social framework) to work from a more historical perspective, taking into consideration the context of enslavement, forced labor, exile, and life on plantations. It's worth asking, in fact, whether a historical base isn't absolutely essential for what Bougerol calls a "reconstruction of social life which takes into consideration reciprocal actions and social relations of modest importance" (p. 8). In this regard, she calls on the *créoliste* movement (particularly Bernabé, Chamoiseau, and Confiant 1989) as support for the idea that "it is impossible to deny that creole societies, more than any others, are dynamic and open" (p. 14). But one wonders whether an ethnographer wouldn't be wise to adopt a more critical, distanced position vis-a-vis a literary/poetical manifesto of the sort the *créolistes* have produced. Why should a heterogeneous society necessarily be more "open" (and by implication tolerant)? And is French Antillean society really so heterogeneous? Talking with people who have come to Guadeloupe from Haiti, Dominica, or metropolitan France, for example, might cast a somewhat different light on the question of openness and tolerance.

Bougerol draws usefully on a range of comparative material from Africa, Afro-America, and Europe. Her description of how a dying person may "*déparle*" to express remorse or confess acts of sorcery, for example, invites comparison with the interrogation of the corpse in many African societies and among the Guiana Maroons. Here we are witnessing the simultaneous presence of two systems – Catholicism with the notion of confession, and paganism with that of sorcery.

Although Bougerol chooses not to address the question of the origins of Antillean sorcery, one is inclined to agree with her that it would be useful to analyze what she calls *la logique en acte* in a system that pulls together therapeutic, magical, and religious beliefs. As Catherine Benoit has put it (1997:101), two systems – *quimbois* on the pagan side and Catholicism on the Christian – are simultaneously in operation. It is not, therefore, a matter of "*la modulation de lois nouvelles, de mélanges illicites*" (a *créoliste* notion that Bougerol calls upon) that gives meaning to these practices, but rather a fundamentally bipartite construction, in place from the very beginning, and resting on ideas and practices emerging from the two traditions.

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Socialist Ensembles: Theater and State in Cuba and Nicaragua. RANDY MARTIN. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994. xii + 261 pp. (Paper US\$ 19.95)

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Most contemporary accounts of socialism have been plagued by reductionism or transhistoricism. In the first instance, ordinary acts and experiences of daily life have been squeezed from society through a sequence of analytical devices that has reduced "society as a whole to the state, and state to government leaders" (p. ix). In taking the Communist Party as a metonym of socialist existence, reductionist approaches (especially state-centrism that, in its post-Westphalian incarnation, has dominated sociopolitical analyses since the 1970s) have impoverished social theory in general and an appreciation of socialism as a historical process in particular. "But what does life look like beyond the state?" (p. 16).

In the second instance, socialism is viewed as an idealization, one that on the one hand militates against the difference between "the socialisms of self and other" (p. 20), abstract and concrete levels of analysis, and the actual and the ideal, and, on the other, renders the ideal as a measure of the actual and ethnographic. What lies at the roots of these (mis)representational views is an absence of civil society. Civil society either dissipates under the totalizing weight of idealization or, having been exclusively knitted with liberal democracy, is considered irrelevant to a socialist situation. Further, this absence makes for the production of a unitary picture of socialism.

In countering these epistemological problems with an ethnography of socialism, Randy Martin embarks on an engrossing excursion through

cultural landscapes of Cuba and Nicaragua to swerve away from vistas of reductionism and an idealization of socialism toward developing "theory and methods adequate to recognize the historicity – the socially significant and situated internal movement – of socialism" (p. 24). The result is *Socialist Ensembles*.

In this insightfully sensible book, Martin situates the study of socialism within the larger problematic of social inquiry – bringing under critical scrutiny a gamut of debates in anthropology and social theory ranging from participant observation and comparative method to theories of state and civil society, from the politics of writing and its attendant "powers of representation" to the emplacement of writing into politics (p. 13). He especially contests the notion of autonomy and the fantasy of freedom encoded in autonomy: "If autonomy turns out to be the effect of a certain social organization that institutes a formal separation of otherwise socialized persons ..., rather than being the condition of development for social organization, the status of autonomy as an object of socialist aspiration is dubious" (p. 207). To vitiate this doubt, Martin stamps his distinct mark on socialist analysis by deploying a core concept: ensemble.

Ensemble is a revealing concept for appreciating socialism "as a principle of human association that develops the capacity for the social" (p. x). However, to recuperate the constituting power of the popular and recover the relevance of civil society to socialist formation, Martin does not reverse these shortcomings by simply replacing the state with civil society. Rather than deleting the state from analysis, he deemphasizes its role. More importantly, rather than examining civil society in theoretical separation from the state, as prescribed by the intellectual calculus of autonomy bequeathed by the European Enlightenment, he analyzes them "as existing only in tension, in relations of mutual interpenetration and displacement" (p. x). These relations reveal themselves best through the mediation of cultural artifacts and practices, of which theatrical performance occupies a privileged space for displaying "ensemble as its own means of organization and reflect[ing] on it as a style of metarepresentation, that is, as a device for seeing how representation operates within a cultural context" (pp. x-xi). Cultural contexts of socialism come alive in his "theatrical ethnography of the popular" (p. 129) in Cuba and Nicaragua, but in maintaining that "just what socialism might be there assumes and generates further desire to grasp what it might be elsewhere," Martin disrupts the usual attachment of the presence of socialism to a place and locates it "in a given situation": the site of the theater (p. 5). His analytics of situation dislodge the notion of a typical theater, for that notion "tends to confuse typicalities of form with shared contexts and

relations" (p. 225). As such, situation "may improve on representation to address the issue of how to move between theater and society, form and context" (p. 225). In staging the particulars of the public in Latin America, theater, "as situation and inscription" (p. 231), and Martin's intervention as representation of metarepresentation, lay bare the fluidity of the conjuncture of art and society, elucidating how that conjuncture is formed: "Just as theater derives its situation from its broader social context, so too can that context only be grasped through an adequate theoretical abstraction from a given concrete instance" (p. 229).

This analytical apparatus constitutes the context of six chapters and a conclusion for working out the relations between theater, socialism, and Latin America. Chapter 1 examines how theater frames ethnographic practices. Chapter 2 situates theater and civil society within the cultural regime of socialism. Chapters 3-6 explore socialism through the prism of theater and map "what of the theatrical dynamics of Cuba and Nicaragua can be attributed to their respective revolutions" (p. 41), which aimed at the democratization of culture. Conversely, pre-revolutionary Cuban and Nicaraguan theater, like Broadway theater, "epitomizes the radical separation of circulation and production that characterizes capitalist exchange and accomplishes the ideologically effective conflation of market with democracy" (p. 26-27), a conflation that is, "as a form of national identity[,] ... doubly problematic" (p. 75). In reviewing a host of theatrical troupes and productions, along with paratheatrical forms – such as processions, feasts, carnival, deistic rites – as part of a framework of public sphere deployed by the colonized "for the appropriation of what is other to them" (p. 43), these chapters demonstrate how "theater is a particularly elastic expression of aesthetic and organizational form that can prefigure broader social developments" (p. x). In conclusion, in critiquing "the idealization implicit in comparative method..., while exploring just what analytic principles would be adequate to think about a specific ideal, in this case socialism" (p. 191), Martin breaks down the unitary depiction of socialism and recasts concepts such as democracy, autonomy, private/public spheres, and centralization/decentralization in the light of ensembles, which account not merely for "the relation of state to civil society rather than assuming a stable opposition" (p. 208), but for generating the conditions of possibility of socialism: "If socialism is to remain possible it must produce legible moments of its own sociality as a feature of its own free associations" (p. 238).

Martin's sophisticated reworking of socialism notwithstanding, especially missing here are an ethnography of spectatorship and a theorization of mediation. Martin's interpretation of theatrical production – based on

the claim that the audience is written into the performance and on a recognition that, although “the audience’s absence in the text ... serves as a limit on what I can theorize about socialism” (pp. 20-21, 18), this absence “reaffirms an appreciation of the limits of representation and helps subvert ethnography’s colonizing inclinations” (pp. 20-21) – overrides any understanding of what theater means to the audience. Recent examples challenge Martin’s fruitless deconstruction of ethnography by showing that, if done sensibly, ethnography not only can overcome its “colonizing inclination,” but can offer possibilities of decolonizing consciousness. Given theater’s energy field, nurtured by the works of imagination, dialogue, spontaneity, and enchantment that rest on and contribute to theater’s hermeneutic ambiguity and ambivalence, what Jacqueline Rose observes of the cinema experience, where “the relationship between views and scenes is always one of fracture, partial identification, pleasure and distrust” (1986:227), may hold truer of theater. Any account of the cultural politics of theatrical production and reception remains incomplete without an ethnography of theater’s energy field and audience’s coming out of theater rearranged. This problem can partly be attributed to the book’s primary postulate that, by trying to confirm mainly *that* theater mediates, rather than focusing more on *how* theater mediates, between the state and civil society divests the concept of mediation of its dialectical vigor and closes the window to a rich anthropological landscape of the audience.¹ Despite these critical remarks, in reinscribing the state, civil society, national identity, cultural democracy, and theater in the actually existing socialist situations in Cuba and Nicaragua, Martin makes a commendable contribution to the literature on socialism, scenographic arts, and Latin America, a contribution that calls for a careful reading.

NOTE

1. Hegel’s “Master and Slave,” that part of the *Phenomenology of Mind* that Marx called “the true birthplace and secret of the Hegelian philosophy,” and Marx’s critique of Hegel’s dialectic are still useful examples of intricate use of mediation.

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Not of Pure Blood: The Free People of Color and Racial Prejudice in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico. JAY KINSBRUNER. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1996. xiv + 176 pp. (Cloth US\$ 44.95, Paper US\$ 15.95)

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Jay Kinsbruner has made a significant contribution to the slowly growing literature on race relations in Latin America. In a clear and concise manner, he has dispelled the myth that Puerto Ricans have not experienced racial discrimination. To the contrary, he supplies good evidence that, as in other Latin American societies, systematic racial discrimination occurred against people of color in Puerto Rico throughout the nineteenth century, and that its effects have lingered on to this day.

Kinsbruner's attempt to define the role of race in the formation of Puerto Rico's society marks one of the few studies of race, as such, within a slave society during the late Spanish colonial period. For that reason, his book proves rich in two ways. First, it sheds light on a little studied aspect of race relations in Latin America, how free people of color lived in a slave society. Second, because the Spanish empire maintained such good archives, he worked from a rich data base that few students of nineteenth-century Latin America enjoy.

Kinsbruner concludes that during the nineteenth century Puerto Rico's free people of color suffered from racial discrimination that limited their political, economic, and social mobility. Through painstaking analysis of marriage, birth, death, occupational, military, and housing records, he gives proof to his claim. At least for those individuals he studied, free people of color lived in a world of limited upward mobility. In all aspects of their lives, from marriage and occupations to living arrangements, they existed in a world divided by color.

Kinsbruner's central argument holds that the openness and physical fluidity of Puerto Rico's society produced two fundamental results. First,

throughout the nineteenth century, free people of color could take part in the colony's economy, but racial prejudice and discrimination limited this opportunity. Second, free people of color readily accepted this system, and tried to assimilate into the white society. People of color aspired to "whiten" themselves in order to benefit from the many social, economic, and political advantages that came with whiteness.

The evidence that Kinsbruner brings to his study sustains his argument, at least for the city of San Juan. In this sense, the title probably exaggerates the extent of his research, since the data he cites come from neighborhoods in San Juan. Nevertheless, his conclusions undoubtedly apply to other urban districts of the island.

Through careful analysis of marriage records, Kinsbruner shows that racial castes usually married within their own groups. Whites married white mates, and colored married colored mates. The evidence he offers to sustain this claim demonstrates that racial bias in mate selection existed, and that it had its origins in Spanish racism that remained throughout the colonial experience. Although racial prejudice harmed San Juan's free people of color in several other ways, it seems most apparent in the ways in which it encouraged them to marry within their own subcastes.

For further proof of the book's central theme, that racial prejudice limited possibilities for the economic improvement of the free people of color, Kinsbruner turned to birth and mortality rates. In his opinion, high birth and mortality rates among free people of color indicate that most of them lived at the poverty level. The preponderance of single female-headed families also indicates, he suggests, that limited economic opportunity and racial prejudice weakened the free colored families. In sum, a long history of racial prejudice "played a heavy hand in free colored economic performance and therefore family structure" (p. 116).

Kinsbruner definitely achieved what he set out to accomplish. He not only identified and defined racial prejudice in Puerto Rico, but he analyzed the impact of racial prejudice on the island's free people of color. He presents his straightforward premise in an easily graspable form, and in so doing adds an important piece to the puzzle of race in the Americas. For this we owe him a debt of gratitude. Though not a brilliant book, it stands as an important contribution to our understanding of race relations in the Caribbean.

Bachata: A Social History of a Dominican Popular Music. DEBORAH PACINI HERNANDEZ. Philadelphia PA: Temple University Press, 1995. xxiii + 267 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95, Paper US\$ 19.95)

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As a commercial genre, *bachata* was, at least for most of its history, of relatively minor international significance in comparison with numerous other Caribbean forms such as reggae and soca. However, this rough-hewn Dominican descendant of Cuban *bolero* and Mexican *ranchera* has provided ample material for Pacini Hernandez's perceptive and detailed examination of subjects as varied as the Dominican music industry, the relationship of music and politics, gender relations, and the perils and pitfalls of cross-over success. As a result, *Bachata* constitutes one of the most valuable ethnographies and social histories of a popular music to date.

Pacini Hernandez's chief concern is with the "relationships between popular music, social identity, and class in the Dominican Republic" (p. xv). Also known as *música de amargue* (music of bitterness), *bachata* (like the early tango or the blues) is one of what Pacini Hernandez has called "musics of marginality," in which lower-class performers and audiences express their sorrows and heartaches in songs full of emotive content. It is a music full of the strumming of guitars and the sobbing of (mostly male) voices in harmony (often thirds), punctuated by the strokes of *bongó* and *maracas*. In Pacini Hernandez's analysis, *bachata* eased the transition of poor rural migrants to the urban shantytowns (Chapter 3), occasionally expressed social outrage at the plight of the lower classes (Chapter 4), and revealed gender conflicts aggravated by economic crisis and social dislocation, as male *bachateros* increasingly complained about, disparaged, and objectified women through music (Chapter 5). The book's narrative also traces *bachata*'s success story: the cross-over popularity of middle-class singer-songwriters (e.g., Juan Luis Guerra, Sonia Silvestre) who incorporated *bachata* into their socially-relevant musics in the late 1980s and 1990s (Chapter 6). As *bachata* shed its stigma, many traditional *bachata* musicians obtained access to the media and found themselves celebrated by sectors of society that had previously repudiated them and their music.

Chapter 2, "Music and Dictatorship," perceptively charts the influence of Generalissimo Rafael Trujillo on the rise of *merengue* as the preeminent Dominican dance music and explores the role of the Trujillo family in

patronizing, recording, broadcasting, disseminating, censoring, and popularizing music. I would quibble with the author's remark that Trujillo was different from most dictators who "tend to pay less attention to cultural affairs as long as these do not challenge or interfere with the regime" (p. 35). Rather, Trujillo was very much in the mold of dictators such as Stalin, Hitler, Ceausescu, Pol Pot, or Somoza, who tended to tinker obsessively with their country's expressive culture to produce desired social and political results. In this same chapter, Pacini Hernandez opens her portrayal of the country's music business with a look at radio broadcasting, recording, dissemination, and the many contexts for consumption (including neighborhood grocery stores). This thorough analysis of the political economy of Dominican music constitutes one of the book's most vivid achievements.

The author's most articulate expression of her approach to bachata comes at the end of Chapter 1: "bachata has always been an expression of a subculture in transition, struggling to create new cultural coherences and to attain form, autonomy, and legitimacy within a hostile society" (p. 34). She is not always as clear, however. For example, her assumption that "style is intrinsically related to the social context in which music or any other expressive event takes place" (p. 18) negates many ethnomusicological studies of music transported through time and space into novel contexts with little evident stylistic change. Her subsequent statement that "the patterning that produces identifiable ways of doing things reflects cultural meanings *shared by all those who participate in a communicative event* such as a musical performance" (p. 18, my italics) undermines much communicative theory (which would separate the sender, the message, and the receiver in such a fashion as to admit miscommunication and, indeed, disparate values). This organic functionalism seems out of place in a study devoted to the social contestation of musical values. Additionally, although Pacini Hernandez initially differentiates "style" from "genre," this distinction often seems blurred elsewhere in the book. There are a few other minor shortcomings: the description of the audible or sonic characteristics of bachata is underdeveloped in contrast to a description of its social characteristics; some narrational problems result from the previous publication of parts of this book as separate articles; and the tone sometimes makes Pacini Hernandez sound more like a fan than a scholar of the music. In addition, two chapters of the book ("Music and Dictatorship" and "Power, Representation, and Identity") are concerned largely with other genres and are only peripherally about bachata. One small annoyance was the number of times the author interjected something like, "again, time has

proved me right," as though clairvoyance and prognostication were the proper measure of a social history.

Pacini Hernandez's "Conclusion" compares bachata to a class of "people's musics" from around the globe, including Andean *chicha*, Nigerian *juju*, and rap. She argues that the experiences of poverty and urbanization shape "musical practice and all its various aesthetic and social functions – dancing, having fun, feeling good, forgetting, lashing out, fighting back, and hearing the sound of one's own voice" (p. 239). In this short statement, she signals the importance of music's emotional content, the complexity of music's many functions, and the rich engagement of music in the lives of the Dominican lower classes, *la gente baja*. *Bachata*, though uneven in places, is a remarkable and readable study that will serve well in classes of anthropology, Latin American and Caribbean studies, ethnomusicology, sociology, or popular culture.

The Representation of Slavery in Cuban Fiction. LORNA VALERIE WILLIAMS. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1994. viii + 220 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.95)

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The Representation of Slavery in Cuban Fiction extends to the realm of nineteenth-century Cuban narrative questions that Americanists such as Jane Tompkins and Richard Brodhead have asked of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: How compatible are realism and sentimentality? What did nineteenth-century authors and readers find plausible, and why? How do antislavery novels buttress their respective claims to truth? What strategic "guarantees of sincerity" (p. 135) do these texts offer? What conventions do they circulate and recirculate? Williams's purpose is to locate Cubans' deep-seated anxieties about racial difference within a discursive web of social and ideological pressures, including political censorship. These anxieties, she argues, circumscribed literary representations (and self-representations) of blacks at a time when Cuba began to imagine itself as an independent nation.

William's overriding concern is what literary representations of slavery and freedom amounted to in an historical environment where anti-slavery

sentiment was hardly incompatible with a belief in slavery not only as an economic necessity, but as a social one. The book engages these questions and concerns through close readings of several nineteenth-century prose texts that range chronologically from the 1830s to the 1890s. First in line, after an introduction that outlines early nineteenth-century debates on slavery among Cuban intellectuals, is Juan Francisco Manzano's slave *Autobiografía*, first published in an English translation by Irish abolitionist Richard R. Madden. A Spanish version did not appear until José Luciano Franco's 1937 edition. The only known self-authored slave narrative to have come out of Latin America, Manzano's autobiography has vexed scholars who seek to link slave literacy and freedom, for this is a text both incomplete and without an actual original. The *Autobiografía's* second part, if indeed it ever existed, is lost, and only a version "corrected" by Anselmo Suárez y Romero survived. Confronted with this situation, critics have focused on the muffling of Manzano's authorial voice and possibilities for recovering that voice's problematic "authenticity." Williams sidesteps such debates; instead, she emphasizes Manzano's imagination as a source of literary authenticity, arguing persuasively that while the *Autobiografía* did "not document the emergence of an autonomous self" (p. 50), it nevertheless systematically frustrated its audience's desire for sentimental realism, that is, "sad" stories of slave victimization.

Manzano's editor is, appropriately, the subject of Williams's next chapter. Her incisive discussion of Suárez y Romero's 1839 antislavery novel *Francisco* and its textual politics adds much to critical assessments of abolitionist rhetoric by showing in detail the implausibility of, and contradictions within, Suárez's representations of Cuban slavery: his tendency to "naturalize the black presence for the novel's implied [white] readers" (p. 82) makes the romantic hero Francisco an object of the reader's pity. Similarly, the mulata Dorotea, for whom Francisco pines, is portrayed at once sympathetically, as a victim of a sadistic master's sexual will to power, and as sexually deviant by "nature" (p. 63).

From *Francisco*, Williams proceeds to Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda's "feminized slave" in *Sab*, an 1841 novel banned in Cuba and oddly excluded from the first Spanish edition of Avellaneda's works. Williams takes the "mask of modesty" that Avellaneda dons in her prologue as an occasion to move beyond the usual, and quite limiting, biographical criticism of this novel into issues of narrative construction – and obstruction. She argues that the novel, "rather than merely reproducing the conventional discourse of impossible love," in this case between a male slave and a female slaveholder, "[evokes] a domain that lies beyond the horizon of the speakable" (p. 101). But if this text proclaims what it

withholds (possibilities for legitimate interracial intimacy), it also fails, in the end, to persuade us that the situation of women is similar to that of Cuban slaves. *Sab* makes the slave exist “simply to confirm the slaveholder’s sense of her own importance” (p. 118), a comment that implicates Avellaneda as well.

Williams’s final two chapters examine novelistic revisions: Antonio Zambrana’s *El negro Francisco* (1875) refers us to the “other” Francisco, the African not represented by Suárez, while *Sofía* is Martín Morúa Delgado’s 1891 literary corrective to Cirilo Villaverde’s *Cecilia Valdés*. Both Zambrana and Morúa charged their literary predecessors with a lack of realism, especially when it came to representing black characters. In an attempt to restore what Zambrana perceived as implausible omissions in *Francisco*, his novel features an “updated hero,” complete with an African tribal past culled from ethnographic texts. But, ironically, even his initial racial pride cannot save this character from self-deprecation and social death. Williams is convincingly critical of Zambrana’s evaluative installations of exoticized difference and of the ways in which all of his characters, black and white, remain entangled in the very discourse of enslavement they purport to resist. Similar strategies of discursive containment characterize *Cecilia Valdés*. Williams’s reading of Villaverde’s novel focuses on the character of María de Regla, particularly on iconographic associations both with the Virgin Mary and with the Yoruba goddesses Yemanjá and Ochún. Perhaps even more interesting than her delineations of African “continuities,” which take their cue from the work of José Piedra and Antonio Benítez-Rojo, are her comments on María de Regla’s rhetorical performance as a slave narrator. Morúa’s *Sofía* is largely of interest to Williams as a novel that gets too mired in its author’s ideological opposition to Villaverde to use realism as a vehicle for the text’s critique of oppression, specifically of late-nineteenth-century conflation of slavery with blackness. What is resoundingly clear by the end of this useful study, which judiciously combines detailed rhetorical analysis with historical breadth, is that free blacks occupied no more of a comfortable place in Cuba’s literary imagination than they did in Stowe’s America.

Van de slavenzweep en de muze: Twee eeuwen verbeelding van slavernij in Suriname. ELMER KOLFIN. Leiden: Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 1997. 184 pp. (Paper NLG 65.00)

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The self-imposed limitations of this study are clear enough. As the subtitle indicates, the author sets out to examine two centuries of images of slavery in Suriname, starting with Dirk Valkenburg's oil painting *Slave dance*, from the first decennium of the eighteenth century, and in fact stopping about 150 years later, more or less at the same time as the tardy abolition of slavery in Suriname in 1863. In Kolfin's view, there is no connection between images of slavery and images of blacks, nor does he pay any attention to images of native Americans or Asians in Suriname society.

The material that remains for study after this rather arbitrary act of subtraction – it rules out consideration of Valkenburg's very interesting painting of a plantation in Suriname now in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, for instance – is nevertheless "worthy of a thorough study" (p. 12). No one is likely to disagree, but a text that runs to less than seventy pages is unlikely to be comprehensive. Still, that would be no objection in itself if the brevity were matched by scholarly precision, a good grasp of the abundant secondary literature, and perhaps even a few brilliant theoretical insights for good measure.

But this is asking too much. To start with scholarly precision, I count five errors of transcription in the ten-line citation from Van Eeghen concerning the painter Valkenburg (p. 22). A few pages earlier (p. 14), the reader had already been reassured that not much importance will be attached to questions of terminology either. This no doubt explains why, after the somewhat astonishing assertion that images of slaves and images of blacks are not connected, Kolfin can effortlessly slide from "The Negro" and "The Negress" to "male slave" and "female slave" (p. 34).

As for a firm grasp of the secondary literature, the opening pages of the essay already warn the reader of what is to come: the "historical" section on slave life in Suriname, like many other passages in the essay, appears to be based on the authority of one or two authors at most, ignoring many important detailed studies.

It is not as if the history of representations of the slaves of Suriname is virgin territory. Varying interpretations of William Blake's copper en-

gravings of black slaves have been offered by Richard and Sally Price and by Bernard Smith, but Smith's authoritative studies of such images do not feature at all in Kolfin's bibliography (if he had read them, he could at least have avoided the blunder about classical dress that he makes on p. 34). At this point, the author's self-imposed limitations are compounded by limitations of a different kind.

One rare occasion on which Kolfin does display an awareness of the existence of an interpretation of the images of Suriname slaves – Paul Vandenbroeck's analysis of Valkenburg's *Slave dance* – he parts company with the Belgian art historian and favors a simplistic logic by which, if the figures in the painting are not caricatures, they must be regarded as an "ethnographic illustration of a slave festivity" (p. 24). Vandenbroeck had argued in a more coherent fashion that such paintings draw on the iconography of European popular culture, which implies a stress precisely on the lack of purely ethnographic motives and on the power of those European motifs. The issue at stake is crucial: over the last twenty years or so, a host of scholars have made major contributions both to the history of exotic representations and to the notion of the ethnographic portrait. Blissfully ignorant of such niceties, Kolfin doggedly sets out to compare "historical reality" with "represented reality" (p. 13). Comparison with many of the better studies of blacks in visual representations, such as David Dabydeen's *Hogarth's Blacks* or Hugh Honour's studies of the image of the black in Western art, renders the study under review hopelessly naive and outdated.

If Kolfin's essay can be said to have a thesis at all, it is that the eighteenth-century representations tended to focus on the slave as an economic object, whereas nineteenth-century representations displayed a more ethnographic interest. Not only is the crassness of such a position unattractive; it is demonstrably hard to square with the evidence. Take Frans Post's numerous paintings of plantation life in Dutch Brazil. Kolfin's verdict (p. 30) is that Post's human figures are too small to tell us very much about the life of slaves, thereby betraying (he asserts) an economic rather than an ethnographic interest. Perhaps he only knows these paintings from reproductions; at any rate, Whitehead and Boeseman, in their magistral study of the animals, plants, and people of Dutch seventeenth-century Brazil by the artists in the retinue of Johan Maurits von Nassau-Siegen, had no difficulty in discerning details such as the stirrups used by riders or the fine details of basketry work.

The sobering conclusion of the above remarks is that every time Kolfin makes a rash statement about "all the illustrations in books designed to inform the European public" (p. 34) or about what is "characteristic" of

seventeenth- and eighteenth-century images (p. 37), the reader is bound to wonder about the firmness of the foundation on which such claims are based. William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* is one of the few exceptions that prove the rule: the publication of an undergraduate essay is not in the student's long-term interest. For a number of years, the Dutch universities have been characterized by a process of inflation, as attaining a first degree has come to be accompanied by the ceremonial that was formerly associated with the conferral of a doctorate. The present essay is part and parcel of this process of inflation, and a good deal of the blame for publishing immature work of this kind rests with Kolfin's mentors at the University of Utrecht, who should have known better. Fortunately, *Van de slavenzweep en de muze* is in Dutch – in this case, one can only breathe a sigh of relief at the limited readership that this inevitably entails. It will be in Kolfin's interests for things to stay that way.

REFERENCE

WHITEHEAD, P.J.P. & M. BOESEMANN (1989). *A Portrait of Dutch 17th Century Brazil: Animals, Plants and People by the Artists of Johan Maurits of Nassau*. Amsterdam: Noord-Holland.

Édouard Glissant: De mémoire d'arbres. JEAN-POL MADOU. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996. 114 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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Perhaps the most important philosophical preoccupation of Édouard Glissant's entire oeuvre is the precarious interdependence of subject and object. It is precisely for this reason that his early work seemed so dauntingly unreadable at the time. The subject so heroically celebrated as a transcendental force by other Caribbean writers, of whatever ideological persuasion, is an intensely problematic and anxiety-filled area of investigation from the outset for Glissant. The early novels essentially treat the difficulty of surveying the unknowable, whether the survey is cadastral (as in *La Lézarde*) or chronological (as in *Le Quatrième siècle*).

In both novels the subject is forced to acknowledge the inaccessibility and inscrutability of island space and is consequently overcome by a disquieting kind of self-consciousness. As Mathieu learns in *Le Quatrième siècle*, “si cette chose lui manquait, s’il ne la possédait pas, c’est qu’il ne l’avait pas sentie ... la science ne donne pas la chose, puisque tu es là frissonnant tout en fièvre.”

In the wake of the failure to establish a transcendental self, Glissant concentrates on the elusive interconnectedness of things. The seer is seen, the narrator narrated and the protagonist is constantly acted on. The elusive nature of the objective world is made more emphatic by the transforming play of light on landscape, the swirling of the wind on the dark hillside, the island’s mangrove space, and the constantly shifting narrative point of view in the novels. The major theme of Glissant’s early fiction is the reconsideration, in terms of the specificities of the Caribbean’s past, of the cruel contradictions that bind master and slave as outlined in Hegel’s paradigm. Like Hegel, Glissant sets out to demonstrate the tragedy of attempting to treat the other as object and the ironic, mutual dependency of self and other in Caribbean history.

The value of Jean-Pol Madou’s monograph is precisely this insight into Glissant’s fiction. A less fanciful subtitle than “de mémoire d’arbres” would have referred to the theme of the master-slave relationship in Glissant’s fiction. Madou’s investigation of this theme is both the strength and the weakness of his short study. He begins his work with the now familiar binarisms of Glissant’s thought – sameness vs. diversity, instant vs. duration, terrestrial vs. territorial, and the poetics of the cry vs. the “prosaics” of the word. He also relates these oppositions to the Hegelian scenario of the master and the slave and recognizes that Glissant, using Caribbean history, produces permutations of the master/slave relationship that go beyond the Hegelian paradigm. The opposition between ecstatic instant and epic accumulation, as Madou shows, is present not only in the master/slave dialectic but also among the planters in *Le Quatrième siècle* and even within individuals both on the “morne” and on the plain.

The rest of Madou’s book is a working out in terms of Glissant’s elemental imagery of the dense and proliferating field of relationships that result from Glissant’s opposed categories. To this extent, the subtitle “de mémoire d’arbres” does suggest the extent to which Glissant uses images drawn from landscape, sea, and wind to suggest the possibility of a new vagabondage or “l’horizontalité d’une libre et mouvante étendue où la prolifération des rhizomes supplantera et déracinera le principe d’une Transcendance unique” (p. 73). Madou devotes two chapters to the complicating presence of Martiniquan landscape in Glissant’s novels.

Chapter 4 is specifically concerned with the question of writing and the calculatingly naive or primitivist presentation of reality that often results from an absence of perspective in his fiction. Again the Hegelian scenario is undone as “le texte glissantien établit une continuité quasi-tactile entre l’oeil et le monde. Chez Glissant c’est le paysage tout entier qui se projette au fond de l’oeil pour y prendre racine” (p. 75). The disconcerted subject incapable of mastery or, in visual terms, focus must yield to an aesthetic of formlessness and mutation. As Madou concludes, “la pensée de Glissant se déplace vers une pensée de tourbillon, de la spirale et du pli” (p. 84).

Madou is not the first critic to remind us that the objective of much of Glissant’s theorizing lies in the constant subversion of reductive polarities. Central to almost all critical work on Glissant at the present time is a realization of the dialogic nature of an oeuvre that strives for an undermining of any possibility of fixed or authoritative versions. Madou’s monograph takes over familiar ground and is particularly good at reminding us of the philosophical and poetic origins of many of Glissant’s theories that now have a more ideological edge to them. The one misgiving is that Madou discovers Glissant as essentially a French writer and theoretician. The references to European thinkers are as frequent as the Caribbean context in this monograph is sketchy. There is only one fleeting reference to another Caribbean writer, Derek Walcott, and absolute silence on French Caribbean writers. Little critical material outside of that available in French is mentioned. To this extent the monograph is at times quite a perceptive virtuoso performance but one that could do with a little of the cultural and ideological errancy that Glissant unceasingly advocates.

Persistent Underdevelopment: Change and Economic Modernization in the West Indies. JAY R. MANDLE. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1996. xii + 190 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.00, Paper US\$ 23.00)

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In *Persistent Underdevelopment*, Jay Mandle takes us on a historical journey through the economic development of the English-speaking Caribbean since emancipation, drawing heavily on the work of Caribbean

scholars. His aim is to explain why "economic modernization" of these small economies has not taken place. His definition of economic modernization is based on a regression of the human development index (HDI) on changes in GNP per capita for several countries. From the positive relationship between the two variables he infers that economic growth must involve economic modernization, the central ingredient of which is a skilled labor force capable of applying modern technology to change the structure of output.

Mandle argues that the failure of a skilled labor force to develop had its origins in the policies of the post-slavery society which provided inadequate options for employment for former slaves. British policy at the time was dedicated to the survival of the plantation economy as evidenced by the decision to import large numbers of indentured workers from India. This lowered wage rates, discouraged plant modernization, and perpetuated low productivity. Unlike George Beckford who attributed persistent underdevelopment to overseas leakage from the plantation economy, Mandle places "plantation agriculture at the center of the region's development difficulties" because it encouraged low wages and low productivity on the one hand and stifled non-plantation agriculture on the other.

The decline of the plantation economy in the early part of the twentieth century left a void which was filled by widespread unemployment. Although W. Arthur Lewis had proposed a policy of industrialization to change and modernize the structure of the Caribbean economy, Mandle points out that the Moyne Commission, which was sent by Britain to investigate the deteriorating social conditions, "simply did not believe that the people of the West Indies were capable of initiating a process of economic modernization" (p. 59). Further, he argues that the aid provided by the Commission "would fail to resolve the region's long-standing inability to initiate the process of economic modernization" (p. 60) because there was no strategy for economic transformation.

Yet Mandle is critical of Lewis's strategy for industrialization because it relied on foreign investment rather than on the internal dynamic of the system, a dynamic that in other countries has historically been generated by the modernization of agriculture. Furthermore, the import-substitution type of industrialization which followed failed to attract anything close to enough capital to employ a rapidly expanding labor force. The end result was massive emigration of labor to the United Kingdom in the 1950s.

The so-called strategy of "industrialization by invitation" according to Mandle, "did little to enhance local technical competencies" (p. 80). Indeed, it is this limited technical competency that he sees as the

"fundamental impediment to Caribbean development" (p. 81), and he attributes it to the failure of agriculture to modernize. This in turn meant that there was little or no pressure put on the educational system to produce technical people.

The emigration of large numbers of relatively skilled people to the United States which began in the 1960s compounded the problem. The migration data on occupational distribution of the migrants between 1967 and 1974 (Table 7, p. 87) include a large share of professional and technical workers. Table 7 is somewhat misleading, however, for it assumes that the occupational distribution in 1974 was for the same people who migrated in 1967. Typically, there is a more significant downgrading in the professional and technical category than the data show. Furthermore, the 46.2 percent share of household workers shown for 1967 does not mean that all those people were household workers. They were for the most part housewives who worked in their own homes. It is therefore not surprising that in 1974 that category accounted for only 3.4 percent of all occupations. Be that as it may, Mandle is right that this was a "population capable of responding speedily to labor market signals" (p. 88).

Mandle gives us a blow by blow account of the socialist regimes of the 1970s in Jamaica, Grenada, and Guyana. One important lesson to be drawn from this experience of excessive state intervention in the economy was that public sector employees were technically unable to manage the nationalized commercial enterprises. The inefficiency of these enterprises generated losses that accelerated the indebtedness which forced them, particularly Jamaica and Guyana, to seek assistance from the International Monetary Fund. The same fate later befell the state capitalism of Trinidad and Tobago as fallen oil prices depleted its foreign exchange reserves.

Although the Caribbean has a comparative advantage in tropical tourism, Mandle expresses strong reservations about the ability of the tourist industry to stimulate economic modernization. As he puts it, "because it employs relatively few skilled and comparatively many unskilled workers, it is not the kind of industry which either characterizes a technologically progressive society or contributes to its construction" (p. 146).

In the end, the view of the Caribbean that emerges from this book is one of an archipelago of small countries enmeshed in a vicious cycle of underdevelopment, out of which they cannot break on their own. Comparative advantage in tourism won't do it. State intervention in the 1970s couldn't do it, and there is not much optimism that the new orthodoxy of the market will either. Not even massive expenditures on education are expected to do it. But Mandle does see a ray of hope:

"Migration has done something which those other elements of Caribbean history have not done, and therein lies hope for the future. For migration has fundamentally reversed a salient element of regional history: the isolation of the people of the West Indies from the process of sustained and rapid technological change" (p. 173). The future economic modernization of the Caribbean therefore lies in the utilization of the skills of the expatriate population now living in advanced countries.

The book brings together a wealth of research on the Caribbean and will be valuable to students and to those in search of a clearly written treatise on the economic history of the English-speaking Caribbean. Those who specialize in the Caribbean economy and its history, however, will find that the author has covered familiar ground.

Corrientes migratorias en Puerto Rico/Migratory Trends in Puerto Rico.
JUAN E. HERNÁNDEZ CRUZ. Edición Bilingüe/Bilingual Edition. San Germán: Caribbean Institute and Study Center for Latin America, Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, 1994. 195 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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This bilingual book is a study of Puerto Rican migration patterns. The first chapter, "Migratory Trends in Contemporary Puerto Rico," offers a brief introduction to the history of Puerto Rican migration. Although Hernández Cruz addresses Puerto Rican migration in the nineteenth century, most of the chapter is devoted to a periodization of Puerto Rican migration in the twentieth century. An important aspect of this chapter is the inclusion of Dominican and Cuban immigration to Puerto Rico, a topic frequently ignored in the literature.

The second chapter, "Puerto Rican Emigration to the United States: 1940 to the Present," presents the results of the author's ethnographic research. Interviews with one-hundred Puerto Rican migrants in the United States, based on the life history method, and focused on their reasons for migrating to the United States, are accompanied by demographic descriptions of the informants.

The third chapter, "Reintegration of Circulating Families in South-western Puerto Rico," is the most original of the book. It emphasizes the

adaptation and cultural identity processes of circulatory migrants in southwestern Puerto Rico. Circulatory migration, one of the most interesting features of Puerto Rican migration, has not only been overlooked by researchers, but has proved difficult to study. U.S. census data do not measure the circulation of migrants. The only information the U.S. census includes is whether or not the person lived in another place five years prior to the interview. However, circulatory migration is virtually impossible to measure through census data. In contrast, the data obtained by Hernández Cruz through the methods of life history and a questionnaire were coded and adapted to study circulatory migration. One of the important contributions of this study is the inclusion of the life histories of Puerto Ricans born in the United States who migrated to Puerto Rico. The author found that "neoricans" were stigmatized and discriminated against by fellow Puerto Ricans in the island.

The fourth chapter, "The Impact of Migrant Circulation on Local Governments in Southwest Puerto Rico," shows the political pressure of return migrants on the local authorities in the southwest of the island. Hernández Cruz reconstructs the problems migrants confront in relation to local government services. At the end of this chapter, he puts forward a list of public policies to address the problems of return migrants.

The fifth chapter, "The Effects of Migration Trends on Population Aging and Population Growth in Puerto Rico: 1960-1980," was written by Clara Muschkin, a sociologist and demographer from Duke University. In 1980, according to United Nations figures, Puerto Rico had a high proportion of elderly persons by Latin American standards. In her exploration of the relationship between migration and the aging of the Puerto Rican population, Muschkin shows how the 1960s net outmigration of people younger than thirty-five and the 1970s decline in outmigration as well as a large proportion of elderly return migration, contributed significantly to the greater weight of the elderly in the population.

In sum, the book offers a brief description of Puerto Rican migration patterns. A major shortcoming is the lack of both a theoretical introduction and a conclusion. The author does not locate the empirical findings within the debates of migration literature. The empiricist bias affects the overall contribution of the book. For readers unfamiliar with Puerto Rican migration, the theoretical relevance of the findings will remain unclear. The book's contribution to the growing literature on transnational migration could have been enhanced if Hernández Cruz had spelled out the theoretical implications of his research.

*Tambú: De legale en kerkelijke repressie van Afro-Curaçaose volks-
uitingen.* RENÉ V. ROSALIA. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1997. 338 pp. (Paper
NLG 49.50)

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Of all that is Curaçaoan culture, Papiamentu is arguably the element most widely shared by all *Yu'i Korsou* ("children of the island"). This unique vernacular has all the requisites to make it a central feature of nationalist discourse. Used in most social settings by virtually all islanders, no matter what class or color, among themselves, Papiamentu as it is being spoken by definition serves as an affirmation of belonging and solidarity.

However, to be considered a "true" *Yu'i Korsou* may require more than simply being born on the island and mastering Papiamentu. In the 1970s, a concept of *bon Yu'i Korsou* was coined, in which color was added as a criterion: to be considered a good, or rather true, child of the island, one needed to be of African origin. By the 1980s, this idea had been elaborated on a programmatic level into a rhetoric of the nation which posited the Afro-Curaçaoan heritage at the center of the national identity. *Di-nos-e-ta* ("this is our own"), ran a new cultural paradigm: ours is a vibrant culture emerging from the days of slavery, forged by slaves and their offspring in an ongoing politics of cultural resistance against their masters, Dutch colonialism, and the postcolonial light-skinned elites.

While the once somewhat "subversive" leanings of *Di-nos-e-ta* soon made it to the mainstream of the cultural establishment, it has taken very long for any scholarly work, at least outside of the realm of Papiamentu studies, to emerge from this new tradition. Rosalia's study on *tambú* is a major attempt to fill part of this gap. *Tambú* is a dance, originating in the period of slavery. However, Rosalia underlines, it is more than just a dance. It is "an expression belonging to the popular religion of the black Curaçaoan slaves and, after emancipation in 1863, of the Afro-Curaçaoan laborers and field workers from the lowest social class" (p. 30). *Tambú* survived both colonial repression and the transition from slavery to freedom and twentieth-century modernization. Its following and impact may have seriously dwindled in the past few decades, but, affirms Rosalia, young Curaçaoans are now rediscovering this "roots" culture, so a bright future lies ahead.

In this book, Rosalia has done a useful and stimulating job of piecing together printed sources on tambú from the days of slavery to the present, and more importantly by collecting a considerable body of tambú lyrics and music and mounting an archive of oral history. A significant collection of lyrics and the testimonies of tambú players, aficionados, and also enemies are brought together here for the first time ever, and provide fascinating, often emotionally charged insights into both tambú itself and the society from which it sprang. Chronologically, the emphasis is on the first half of the present century, a period characterized by dazzling development from economic stagnation to industrial buoyancy triggered by the establishment of a huge Shell refinery. As in the days of slavery, Rosalia demonstrates, church and colonial authorities concurred in their abhorrence and repression of the tambú. Tambú was considered not only indecent, uncivilized, and brutal, but equally a disturbing sign of cultural protest which might all too easily lead into outright defiance of the colonial order.

Being a tambú player himself, Rosalia brings not simply a particular enthusiasm, but also a keen sense of the musical technicalities and of the changing environments in which tambú used to be played and is played today. Again, this makes for a timely contribution to the study of Afro-Curaçaoan popular culture.

As Rosalia rightly remarks, tambú's history, especially its relation to the colonial order, is nothing unique in Caribbean context. Still, this particular island story had not yet been told and only now may hold its own pride of place. Rosalia optimistically places his effort in the service of "the creation of a healthy national conscience," and thus to "the creation of a new Curaçaoan" (p. 9). All this may be laudable, but unfortunately the author brings an apparently intentional lack of nuance to the subject which, to this reader at least, undermines the book's qualities. The analysis of church and colonial oppression is molded in a Marxist jargon which lacks any attempt at sophistication. In this mold, even contemporary limitations imposed on tambú gatherings by the autonomous island government need to be discussed in purely ideological class terms.

In addition, the book suffers from conceptual vagueness. Time and again, tambú is, probably rightly, presented not simply as "a way of life," but as an element of popular religion. Yet nowhere in the book do we find a systematic analysis of what this popular religion is, or exactly how it relates to Catholicism. This is a major omission, as Catholicism is both the religion officially adhered to by the vast majority of Curaçaoans and, of course, a church with a long tradition of fierce repression of tambú. Finally, the writing betrays a certain unfamiliarity with relevant literature, not just

in comparative Caribbean perspective, but also with reference to writings on Dutch Caribbean history. To cite just one example: while Rosalia dedicates several pages to the African origins of Curaçaoan slaves (pp. 37-40), he eventually concludes that not much is known on the subject, apparently unaware of the near definitive 1990 study on the Dutch slave trade by Johannes Postma, *The Dutch and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815*.

For this and other problems in this study, an active doctoral committee could have been of much help to the author. *Tambú* is a virtually unaltered commercial edition of a thesis defended at the University of Amsterdam. At the occasion of the defense, true to style, the candidate surprised his committee by elaborately responding to various questions in Papiamentu rather than in the colonizer's tongue. The committee did not protest, perhaps practicing the old tactics once coined as "repressive tolerance." Too much of that attitude, however, may not benefit either a good cause or the candidate. The book suffers from many elemental problems besides the overdose of political jargon, obvious omissions in the author's knowledge of the relevant literature, and a lack of conceptual clarity. The flawed composition includes numerous lengthy repetitions, not to mention errors of fact and style, misspellings, etc. The doctoral committee would have served this candidate much better by scrutinizing his work and truly guiding the author, rather than too easily accepting this as a yet unfinished version of his otherwise admirable work. Likewise, Rosalia merited a more serious publisher than the Walburg Pers, which apparently spent extremely little effort or money in editing the book, and even managed to misspell the author's name on the title page. *Tambú* is a timely and useful study, but could and should have been much better. One would have hoped to congratulate the doctor, tambú player, and expert, on a more sophisticated and finished book.

"Chi ma nkongo": Lengua y rito ancestrales en El Palenque de San Basilio (Colombia). ARMIN J. SCHWEGLER. Frankfurt: Vervuert, 1996. 2 vols., xxiv + 823 pp. (Paper US\$ 88.00)

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This two-volume monograph is devoted to a linguistic analysis of the *lumbalú* or funeral chants of the Afro-Colombian village of Palenque de San Basilio, where an Afro-Iberian creole language (Palenquero or *lengua*) continues to be spoken. Previous scholarship on these songs shed little light on their nature, revealing few words and meanings, and attributing a higher degree of "Africanness" to the texts than is warranted by objective study. Schwegler's work goes far beyond an analysis of the *lumbalú*, encompassing a comprehensive account of Palenquero, Afro-Caribbean language, creole languages, and Afro-Hispanic anthropology. The two-volume work is centered on the meticulous interpretation of some thirty-six *lumbalú* songs, as collected by the author and by other researchers who have visited Palenque. These analyses are supplemented by numerous asides on the formation of Palenquero, the phonology and grammar of this language, African anthropological patterns, Afro-Hispanic language of other regions, and the social history of Palenque.

Schwegler's work encompasses two fundamental postulates regarding the *lumbalú*. The first is that these songs are not the partially decreolized outcome of originally ancestral African songs, but rather are essentially modern creations, based on a combination of regional Spanish and Palenquero, to which African and pseudo-African words and onomatopoeic elements have been added. "Modern" is a relative term here, since Schwegler suggests that the *lumbalúes* known today may be more than two centuries old; they are, however, based on a combination of Spanish and Palenquero which has changed little during this period. As a corollary, Schwegler suggests that the active use of spoken African languages in Palenque disappeared very early, if in fact the population ever used an African language as the primary means of communication. At the same time, Palenque was characterized by a perhaps unexpected linguistic homogeneity, with Bantu languages of the Congo Basin (particularly ki-Kongo) providing the principal substratum. The total absence of verifiable extra-Bantu etyma in Palenquero will eventually require explanation (none is offered in this book), given the heterogeneity of the African population in Cartagena during the formative period of Palenquero.

In other studies, the presumably more "Afro-creole" nature of the *lumbalúes* has been taken as indirect evidence that modern Palenquero has been partially decreolized in the direction of regional Spanish. By demonstrating the quintessentially Ibero-Romance character of the *lumbalú* language, Schwegler in effect invalidates the use of these songs as evidence of decreolization, thus leaving the notion of decreolization open to conjecture. Regardless of when the *lumbalú* tradition came into existence (and Schwegler's analysis hints that this might have been later

rather than earlier), the *lumbalú* language cannot be taken as an intermediate stage between the use of African languages and the development of the Palenquero creole language.

The second postulate reinforces the conclusion that the basic *lumbalú* language is Palenquero plus Spanish; many "unintelligible" elements previously attributed to African languages are in fact phonetic deformations of Ibero-Romance elements. This interpretation stands in contrast to the prevailing views in the community itself, where the *lumbalú* songs are uniformly regarded as being the most "African" cultural artifacts, while the elderly women with the largest song repertoires are revered as links to an African ancestral past.

In reconstructing the linguistic history of Palenque de San Basilio, Schwegler postulates an early stage (ending before 1700) in which Palenquero resulted from the gradual relexification of an Afro-Portuguese pidgin or creole which, according to Schwegler and other proponents of the "monogenetic" theory of Afro-Atlantic creole formation, is the mother lode from which the remaining creoles can be derived. Palenquero contains indisputable Portuguese elements, but the evidence that an Afro-Portuguese pidgin once permeated larger expanses of Spanish America is more tenuous, and little in the way of new argumentation is offered in this book. The second stage in the development of Palenquero extends to around 1950, and represents the period of stable diglossia between Spanish and Palenquero. In subsequent years, the shift away from Palenquero among younger residents has been considerable, but Schwegler asserts that little if any decreolization of Palenquero has occurred in the past 200 years. Spanish simply and abruptly supplants *lengua* from one generation to the next, rather than yielding an increasingly Hispanized Palenquero.

The primary methodology employed by Schwegler in his close reading of the *lumbalú* texts is a detailed etymological and anthropological inquiry into elements previously regarded as unintelligible words or possibly as Africanisms. Many of the words in question turn out to be of Ibero-Romance origin, phonetically modified during the early stages of Afro-Hispanic contact and further deformed by linguistic drift. Thus the *chi* of the title (taken from a line in a *lumbalú*) is derived from Ibero-Romance *de*, as is *ri* in *ri ma rioso mi* 'of my gods.' The latter derivation finds many homologues among Afro-Iberian pidgins and creoles, while the devoiced *chi* (the common result of palatalization of /ti/ in some Afro-Portuguese creoles) is not found in other Afro-Iberian languages. Palenquero also contains "pseudo-Africanisms," i.e. Ibero-Romance words that have taken on an African phonotactic configuration: *ngalá* < *agarrar* 'to grab,' *casariambe* < *casa de hambre* 'cemetery' [lit. 'house of hunger']. Finally,

some Palenquero words are presumed emotive forms, onomatopoeias, or as yet undisclosed Africanisms.

A key element in the analysis of the *lumbalú* is the fact that most such songs do not contain a fully coherent set of lyrics, but rather consist of code-switched phrases in Spanish and Palenquero, with some onomatopoeic elements and ancestral African words (syntactically and semantically unrelated to the remainder of the song) thrown in for good measure. The strong Spanish lexical component is regarded – somewhat counterintuitively – as evidence in favor of the traditional nature of these songs (p. 129).

Following the introductory materials, the monograph continues with sections describing anthropological aspects of the *lumbalú*, as well as the sociolinguistic situation of Palenque de San Basilio. The second part of the monograph, representing nearly two thirds of the total text, provides detailed analyses of individual *lumbalúes* presented one at a time, interspersed with a variety of comments on etymology, phonology, African substrata, and the creolization process. In addition to songs collected by the author, there are reanalyses of previously collected songs, including new interpretations of hitherto unidentified or misidentified elements. The presentation of the data is masterful, if sometimes bafflingly dense. The organizational structure of the *lumbalú* deconstructions is at times difficult to follow, since Schwegler employs a linear elucidation of each text, producing a combination of anthropological, etymological, and creole-theoretical remarks, with the pattern repeating for each of the songs analyzed. This format, while perhaps unavoidable given the fact that critical bits of information are scattered throughout the individual *lumbalú* texts, makes it difficult to grasp the totality of the *lumbalú* linguistic structure. The digressions – each of which merits at least a separate section – are many and complex, and might better have been placed in a single location. The book's concluding chapter provides a partial remedy; the main points of the monograph are succinctly pulled together. The text ends with a useful glossary of Palenquero words, the largest ever published.

In summary, *Chi ma nkongo* is at once a masterful analysis of the elusive *lumbalú* language and a major breakthrough in Afro-creole studies. Complementing earlier scholarship on the structure of the Palenquero language, Schwegler offers insight into the formation of this creole language and the culture in which it is immersed. His methodology and documentation are impeccable, and while he occasionally allows himself some speculative asides, his argumentation is always sound and his proposals worthy of serious consideration. This book is destined to become a bench-

mark against which future analyses of creole languages and cultures will be measured.

Creole and Dialect Continua: Standard Acquisition Processes in Belize and China (PRC). GENEVIÈVE ESCURE. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997. ix + 307 pp. (Cloth US\$ 89.00)

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The book under review is written with an awareness that “correlating social and linguistic factors for explanations of language change is a relatively recent target in linguistics” (pp. 1-2). The author’s main goal is to gain a better understanding of the language development processes involved in “subtypes of second dialect acquisition” (p. 3) by looking at the English-based creoles and acrolects acquired by creole speakers in Belize and the relation between standard language and colloquial/dialect in China. We are looking therefore at a study in bidialectalism which tries to answer the following question: “If there are contact-induced linguistic universals, how can they be differentiated from language-specific universals?” (pp. 6-7). Thus the necessity to study one structural aspect – topic mechanisms – in two different, but not unrelated, sociolinguistic contexts. The working hypothesis is that unguided learners, or learners without a stable model, may be forced to rely on general pragmatic/functional principles more than on syntactic rules, because of the inaccessibility of a standard grammar. If speakers pragmatically rearrange the target syntax, we may be able to find universal principles at work, independently of the specific language situation. To do this, Escure chooses a double framework: a sociolinguistic methodology to inquire about and explain extralinguistic variables that influence language choice, and a functional-typological framework for cross-linguistic generalization. The latter is particularly well suited to provide an understanding of the interaction between pragmatics and syntax, which is necessarily a main preoccupation of this study. For creole theory, Escure posits a challenging hypothesis: “that second dialect acquisition is somewhat analogous, though occurring under apparently less traumatic conditions, to the situations which permitted the genesis of pidgins and creoles” (p. 20).

The book consists of two main parts: Chapters 2 to 4 introduce and discuss the sociolinguistic and historical environment of the Belizian creole continuum; Chapter 3 in particular deals with the relationship between the acrolect and the standard. Escure suggests treating acrolects as innovations that do not develop according to a specific model: in this setting the standard is remote, external, and abstract as it is not spoken by any particular group. The simultaneous existence and mixing of different lects is what causes the high variability of the acrolect, an observation that applies just as well to the situation of the official language in China. Escure then focuses on topic mechanisms such as fronting, repetition, and presentation and their distribution in discourse. The data show an interesting crosslectal homogeneity: though the acrolect and basilect differ in phonology, morphology and some syntactic aspects, at the discourse level the basic strategies are similar. The possibility of transfer from the basilect is argued against on the basis of the similarity of topic strategies found in an external lexifier as conversational American English. The acquisition of acrolects therefore does not follow a development from rather undefined pragmatic structure to strictly defined syntactic structures, and it implies that if such a path exists, it is not unilateral. To further sustain the claim that more than substrate influence is at work and that, at least at the discourse level, "basic strategies underlying information processing are identical in all language types" (p. 121), Escure then turns to analyses of second dialect acquisition in Chinese: Chapters 5 to 8 tackle the sociolinguistic situation of China with particular focus on topic strategies in literary Putonghua (Common Language), colloquial varieties spoken in Wuhan, and a narrative style of Wu dialect. Here too we find that one particular kind of topic mechanism is preferred throughout the different varieties; topic prominence is a fundamental discourse strategy in several varieties of Chinese, though it is unclear which topic particles are used when. A final chapter tries to provide a lid for each boiling pot; this turns out to be a difficult enterprise, not facilitated by the fact that Escure cannot resist adding in a few new spices, such as the difference between borrowing and interference, issues in the grammaticalization of topics, and general directions for educational policies, before arriving at the conclusion that "In dialect acquisition, it is clear that the incorporation of substratal features is not merely a calquing process but it is, in part, a dynamic reinterpretation through superstratal influences, and also affected by contact universals that appear to operate most effectively at the pragmatic level" (p. 286).

This rather eclectic book will be of great interest to a wide audience. It presents challenging insights into the process of creolization even if

Escure does not deal with the implications of her ideas; it has a deep and clear overview of the much misunderstood sociolinguistic situation of China; and it offers interesting data for language acquisition studies. However, the appeal of the book, the diversity of topics, and the broad theoretical approach can also be seen as its weakness. For one thing, it would have been interesting and more convincing to see a discussion of structural features other than topic mechanisms in both settings. But as Escure herself notes (p. 264), she chose to sacrifice this in favor of analyzing a broader linguistic repertoire. There is no doubt though that she successfully demonstrates the depth of analysis and clarity of explanation that can be reached by correlating social and linguistic factors in linguistic studies. In this respect, this book is an important contribution to a style of linguistics which we will hopefully see more of.